University of Alberta

Political Culture and Nationality in Russian-Ukrainian Relations

by

Mikhail A. Molchanov

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall 1998

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Abstract

The thesis addresses the problem of political culture and national identity in two of the post-Soviet states: Russia and Ukraine. The author argues in favour of an interpretivist approach to the subject, seeing political culture as an historically determined pattern of collective political behaviour. Russian political culture is characterized as revolutionary-conservative and developmental-authoritarian. Ukrainian political culture is distinguished by a combination of such ideal-typical complexes as localism, survivalism, regionalism, and dependency. It is argued that both Ukrainian and Russian nationalisms should be regarded as elite-constructed phenomena, rather than expressions of spontaneous mass mobilisations. Russian-Ukrainian relations after the collapse of communism are permeated with identity considerations. The politics of identity makes use of the available political-cultural material and cannot but be structured by the inherited political cultures. The author observes the process of reciprocal learning on the part of the national elites of the two countries. This process may change the terms of the Ukrainian-Russian dialogue and eliminate the recurring model of centre-periphery, furthering respective changes in the two political cultures.

Acknowledgements

This thesis could not have been completed without generous support and encouragement of the faculty and staff at the Department of Political Science, University of Alberta. Special thanks go to my supervisor, Professor Fred Judson, who recruited me to the Ph.D. program and invested considerable time and effort in my schooling. Professors Laurie E. Adkin, Wenran Jiang, Larry Pratt, Malinda Smith, and Robert Gilsdorf were particularly helpful in discussing the work and giving invaluable critical feedback. Administrative Professional Officer Audrey Bell-Hiller and librarian Alice Lau made working on campus enjoyable. A kindly given opportunity to lecture at the Department significantly advanced my teaching experience and research for the dissertation.

Professor David Marples of the Department of History, University of Alberta, and Drs. Zenon Kohut and Frank Sysyn of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies in Edmonton provided additional guidance and support. Dr. Oleh S. Ilnytzkyj of the Division of Slavic and East European Studies at the University of Alberta shared results of his related study, and did not hesitate to edit a paper that was written at an early stage of my dissertation research.

Concluding chapters were prepared at the Institute of Advanced Studies of the United Nations University in Tokyo. As a PhD Fellow at the UNU/IAS, I was able to benefit from contacts with Professors Kazuo Nakai (University of Tokyo), Kinhide Mushakoji (Meiji Gakuin University), and Shigeki Hakamada (Aoyama Gakuin University). Financial and institutional support of the UNU/IAS and Prof. Nakai's consistent guidance are gratefully acknowledged.

Colleagues at other universities and research institutions helped to shape the vision and fill the gaps: Dr. Alexander J. Motyl (Harriman Institute, Columbia University), Professors Georgii Derluguian (Northwestern), Wsevolod Isajiw (Toronto), John S. Jaworsky (Waterloo), Mykola Mykhal'chenko (Academy of Sciences, Ukraine), Oleksii Onyshchenko (Central Academic Library, Ukraine), Nicolai N. Petro (Rhode Island), Roman Szporluk (Harvard), and Volodymyr Yevtukh (Academy of Sciences, Ukraine).

For innumerable family contributions, I want to thank my wife and unwavering friend, Marina, my mother, Nina Timofeyevna Kazanina, and my sister Vera Molchanova, and to honour the memory of my father Aleksandr Prokofievich Molchanov (1922-1975).

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INTRODUCTION

If there is one common line unifying various works on Russian politics and society, the theme of the unique Russian political culture would probably be the first pretender. Whether it was conceptualized as political culture, national character or even destiny, the idea that the Russian politics should be somehow different from what we might find in other countries was usually present. Even when more generalizing comparativist or institutionalist accounts were offered, political culture often lurked backstage as a "residual variable" (R. Lane, 1992), always there to "explain out" whatever has been left unexplained.

New works on the topic appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union (see Bahry, 1993; Finifter and Mickiewicz, 1992; Fleron, 1996; Miller, Reisinger and Hesli, 1993; Petro, 1995; Raeff, 1994). While some of them continued to argue that Russia was doomed to chase the "mirage of democracy" without approaching any closer to the real thing (Steele, 1994), there were attempts to demonstrate that institutional change can actually influence traditions of governance, and that mass culture in the country was not that far way from what we might find in the West (Hahn, 1993). The unravelling of the former superpower created an additional problem for scholars, as the once unified field of research was now fragmented into several nationally defined subfields. While only recently they could have been described as "subcultures" at the most (White, 1979), the reality of the new state formations demanded more respectful treatment. Explicit comparisons between Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, etc., appeared in print (Reisinger, Miller, Hesli, and Maher, 1994).

The end of communism saw hardly expected nationalist mobilizations taking place in most of the newly independent states. Very soon, it became obvious that the very success of transitions to democracy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union depends on the way the national question is being formulated and solved there (cf. Linz and Stepan, 1996, chaps. 19-20). The simple progression from subject to participatory to civic culture of a modern democracy that could be hypothesized according to Almond and Verba's (1963) scheme did not materialize. It has been proved once again that participation may not necessarily lead to democracy, and by no means should the latter be equated with mere electoralism. There are times and situations when conscious withdrawal from officially-induced participation may serve the democratic cause better, preparing ground for a genuine civil society to take root and protecting it from unfavorable influences of the state.

This work approaches the problem of nationalism after communism, explicitly situating it in a broader political-cultural field. Nationalism is looked upon as a political-cultural phenomenon in its own right. Political culture is understood as a complex of historically established modes of collective political action, and the distinction between elite and mass political cultures is taken as methodologically important. Postcommunist nationalism appears as elite-constructed politics and ideology that are extensively drawn upon to compensate for state incapacity and the underdevelopment of civil society in newly liberalized nations.

While Russian political culture has been extensively studied since at least the late 1950s, Ukrainian political culture barely presented a research problem until recently. The reason was simple, though not plainly obvious to this author - the Ukrainians lacked a state of their own. Indigenous traditions of governance and local styles of politically relevant behaviour nevertheless had a chance to develop, even though the country was ruled by foreigners. Ukrainian political culture should not be treated as just a regional variety of the Russian political culture, if only because it has developed under the influence of Polish, Austro-Hungarian, and other state formations, too. The study of Ukrainian political culture presents an important and long overdue research task of its own.

The explicit comparison of the Russian and Ukrainian political cultures helps to throw the principal values of both peoples into a sharper relief. In addition to a seldom-attempted conceptualization of the Ukrainian political culture as such, this approach allows us, one, to see the Russian political culture in a highly illuminating juxtaposition to its closest neighbour and counterpart. By comparing two political cultures, we may arrive at a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of both.

The next question of significant practical and theoretical value concerns the nature of Russian-Ukrainian relations, as they developed historically and continue to evolve at the moment. It is a firm belief of this author that the concept of political culture should be extended beyond the state-by-state descriptions and comparisons. The political culture of international and bilateral relations is too important a research topic to be neglected. Whether we study cross-cultural negotiations or security-related matters, the political culture of international dialogue should be taken into account.

The political culture and national identity of a country are mutually complementary

aspects of the same phenomena. Political culture forms an important part of the national identity. Nationality is more than a sum of ethnic characteristics. It is politically shaped, and it bears an impact of the national traditions of governance. On the other hand, political culture itself is defined nationally, not in a sense of academically-established conventions, but in a sense of its real-world genealogy and actual form of existence. Political culture can be seen as a form of historical memory of a nation, since it organizes contemporary political behaviour in the patterns that represent nothing less but the lessons drawn by the nation from its earlier historical experience.

The close interconnection between political culture and national identity of a people makes it all the more expected that explicit analyses of their reciprocal influence should not be uncommon. However, this is not usually the case. Political culture and nationality are studied by different scholars; the works on one subject seldom tackle the other. Ethnicity and nationality, on the one hand, and political culture studies, on the other, remain two different fields of expertise.

One of the goals of this work is to connect the study of political culture of the two largest post-Soviet states to the problem of postcommunist nationalist mobilizations. I argue that nationalism after communism is a phenomenon of political culture and the result of conscious choices made by political elites. It has nothing to do with primordial ethnic animosities and should not be tackled in terms of a security dilemma either. Postcommunist nationalism did not arise out of external threats to the security of newly independent states, but created these states in the first instance and made them afraid of each other in the second. In other words, external "threats" were introduced as part and parcel of domestic nationalist mobilizations. As with any other self-fulfilling prophecy, the myths became reality, once they were taken seriously.

The immediate practical question that I wanted to address in this study was that of the prospects for Russian-Ukrainian coexistence after the end of the Soviet Union. I preferred not to answer it by documenting all the minute details of the Russian-Ukrainian political, military, economic and cultural relations as they evolved since 1991. Instead, I chose to look at the political cultures of the two countries and at the culture of their bilateral negotiations in particular. If we want to go beyond the surface of today's political life and to uncover its deeper cultural and historical foundations, there is no other way to deal with the problem.

A well-known hypothesis of "democratic peace" postulates that democracies never go to war with each other. This is essentially a political-culturalist proposition. It asserts that achievement of a certain level of political development prevents the state from attacking one of its kin. Though neither Russia nor Ukraine can be considered a full-fledged democracy, these two are in many respects of a kinship. Their political and national identities, histories and cultures are mutually intertwined, while the languages have developed from roots common to both. Does it say anything about their expected behaviour in a conflictual situation?

The Serbo-Croatian experience seems to indicate that linguistic and historical proximity of two nations cannot guarantee against an outbreak of hostilities between them. However, the case can hardly invalidate the idea that political-cultural variables should be taken into consideration when attempting to determine the outcome of a conflict. The Serbian and Croatian political cultures are in fact deeply incongruent. The comparison of the Russian and Ukrainian political cultures demonstrates, on the other hand, their mutual compatibility and complementarity. These features diminish the possibility of a military conflict between the two countries and bode well for their peaceful and mutually beneficial coexistence.

If we take the nature of the Ukrainian-Russian relations after the end of communism to be our dependent variable, no less than three independent variables should appear in the political-cultural scheme of causality: the political cultures of the two interacting nations and the emergent political culture of their interaction per se. Consequently, separate chapters are devoted to the analysis of Russian political culture, Ukrainian political culture, and the political culture of the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue. Preceding them are chapters on the theory and methodology of political culture research in general and research on the Russian/Soviet political culture in particular. Altogether, the work consists of six chapters, the introduction, the conclusion, and the list of consulted sources.

A host of issues of significant theoretical and methodological import are found in the intellectual history of the concept of political culture and in discussions of the relative merits of various approaches used in political culture studies. Though the term "political culture" itself is rather recent in origin, we cannot say the problem it represents appeared yesterday. Throughout millennia, people have continued musing over the question of good and bad governance, and tried to correlate power and justice, political imperatives and ethical norms.

We witness essentially the same debate today, in the polemics involving neoconservatives and social-democrats, critical theorists, liberals, and postmodernists. Perhaps we may learn something important from what has been said and done earlier, even from our most ancient predecessors. The study of the intellectual pre-history of the concept of political culture satisfies the quest for knowledge that might seem unnecessary only to those overconfident admirers of modernity who truly believe this world is the best of all possible worlds.

After a selective analysis of the ancient and early modern views on the problem of power and ethics, I continue with a brief survey of contemporary developments in the field of political culture studies. The second part of Chapter 1 presents several methodologically distinct ways to conceptualize political culture, known under the names of sociological/behaviorist, anthropological, structuralist, and phenomenological approaches. I include postmodernism as a political-cultural school of thinking par excellence, because of the centrality of the power-society-individual nexus for postmodernist discourse in general. Postmodernism, in this author's view, continues the phenomenological tradition of theorization, even if explicitly denying it. The comparison between schools helps to demonstrate certain advantages phenomenology may have over sociological behaviorism when dealing with the themes of political culture.

Chapter 2 is devoted to an elaboration of this idea. Drawing on phenomenological classics and more recent publications on the subject, I look at the concept of political culture from the interpretivist phenomenological standpoint. Main features of the phenomenological approach to political culture research are briefly examined and summarized. Arguments against positivist "scientization" of culture and society are presented. A postulate of meaning-congruence between the observer and the observed is defended.

On the basis of this theorization, political culture is introduced as an intersubjectively-manifested phenomenal constellation of relatively stable, recurrent patterns of social behaviour with respect to government and governance. As a collective property, it cannot be simply disaggregated into individual attitudes and modes of behaviour. Political culture is a dominant mode of symbolic reproduction of power relations in a given society. As such, it should be correlated with a historical path of development of this society, not with the opinions or behaviour of its individual citizens. Opinion surveys may be used to demonstrate the link between opinions and underlying political values, but they are of little

help if we want to know how these values arose in the first place.

With this understanding of what political culture is and how it should be approached, I move on to the analysis of the available literature on Russian/Soviet political culture and nationality. The literature review that appears in Chapter 3 breaks the vast pool of Sovietological writings into what may be called "the school of continuity" and "the school of change." Representatives of the first school see Russian political culture as little more than a force of inertia. Their opponents emphasize changes in political culture and argue that these shifts should be related to transformations of the society at large.

The change of broader theoretical models in the field of Soviet studies also altered the mainstream view on how Russian/Soviet political culture should have been dealt with. Consequently, it was necessary to assess major shifts in the methodology of Soviet studies in general and the impact the change of focus had on the political culture subfield. I take totalitarian, behaviorist, and interpretivist approaches as benchmarks for this inquiry, looking at how each of the models framed the perception of what the Soviet political culture (and hence, Soviet society) was.

I further review the existing literature on the Soviet/Russian and Ukrainian nationalities and national relations. While the Soviet nationality policies are usually presented as simple continuation of nationality policies of the Russian Empire, Ukraine and Ukrainians commonly take the position of a suffering side. A comparison between several competing theoretical frameworks reveals that realist approaches and certain applications of the rational choice methodology can give us a more subtle and more convincing picture of national relations in the area. A model of collaborating and competing ethnopolitical actors who learn to use resources of the state to their individual benefit may better describe the situation in the post-Soviet space. The established political culture not only influences the process of ethnopolitical competition, but is influenced itself and changes accordingly. National identity appears as one of the most important political-cultural resources in the power contestation games of postcommunist society. If we approach Soviet and post-Soviet nationality politics in this way, we will have to acknowledge that the idea of permanent oppressors and permanent losers among the nations of the area cannot withstand facts.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the analysis of Russian political culture and the phenomenon of modern Russian nationalism. Drawing on historical evidence and data of

more recent nature, I attempt to explain certain paradoxes in Russian politics before and after communism. The meaning-structures that gave rise to seemingly inconsistent political manifestations on both elite and mass levels of society are grouped into two main complexes pertaining to the Russian political culture at large. The first one is distinguished by a high degree of ambivalence and oscillations between revolutionary and conservative lines of behaviour. The second one gives growth to the phenomenon that can be described as developmental authoritarianism in the broadest sense of the word.

Both developmental-authoritarian and revolutionary-conservative subsystems of the Russian political culture should be approached as ideal-typical constructions, rather than ontologically independent groups of values. Revolutionism as conservatism is manifested in the voting inconsistencies that have become so characteristic of the Russian electorate since the last years of perestroika. On the elite level, the post-Soviet "liberal" revolution and nomenklatura privatization that followed are also best explained through reference to the revolutionary-conservative matrix of behaviour. The switch from a "revolutionary" period of primary accumulation to the conservative glorification of the Russian "traditional values" that has occurred within the span of five-six years after the fall of communism demonstrates the internal dialectical flexibility of the pattern.

The ideal type of the Russian developmental authoritarianism is construed to designate a much broader range of phenomena than those analyzed in the better-known studies of Latin American bureaucratic authoritarianism. In tracing the roots of the specifically Russian developmental-authoritarian tradition, I take the Petrine "well-ordered" police empire (see Raeff, 1983) as a major point of departure. The idea of "speeding" development up by sheer force of political will had found its first incarnation there. Subsequent attempts to modernize the country through executive fiat were undertaken by czars, commissars, perestroika reformers and Yeltsin's "liberals." In all these cases, the rulers acted under the assumption that conscious organizational effort may substitute for the natural process of economic development and self-organization. In postcommunist Russia, developmental authoritarian culture informs economic and social policies, relations between the centre and the regions, and the division of power between main branches of the government. It significantly influences Russian foreign policy, especially the relations with the "near abroad" countries.

The new Russian nationalism cannot be properly understood without taking account of both revolutionary-conservative and developmental-authoritaritarian trends in postcommunist political culture. In sharp contrast to the earlier history of nationalist mobilizations in Europe, Russian nationalism does not pave the way to modernity. It rather represents a conservative reaction to the loss of the previously dominant Russian/Soviet identity that had long served as a substitute for underdeveloped national consciousness of the "imperial" people. New nationalism unites contradictory elements of "revolutionary-conservative" behaviour within a single ideational framework, since it strives to preserve remnants of society from further disintegration, on the one hand, and gives an outlet to channel social protest, on the other.

In Chapter 5, I look at political culture and nationality in Ukraine. Since Ukraine had been devoid of independent national statehood throughout most of history, its political culture developed features of dependency and parochialism. It was the political culture of a stateless nation, which meant that patterns of power-related behaviour had to be construed through the mechanism of adjustment to exogenous sources of authority. A political culture of accommodation reflected the country's predicament and helped to deal with it.

As Ukraine was divided and redivided among its more or less distant neighbours, so the political culture that Ukrainians developed could not but be fragmented into several regionally, linguistically and religiously defined parts. Fragmentation, in turn, fostered localism, parochialism and dependency. It also prevented national consolidation and thwarted the ambitions of would-be nation-builders. It remains a significant feature of Ukrainian politics today, keeping the Russified East and South at arm's length from the nationalistic West of the country.

The inconsistent nature of the Ukrainian political culture has greatly contributed to the secondary and dependent character of Ukrainian nationalism. As a particular example of "learning by doing," Ukrainian nationalism followed in the wake of similar intellectual and political developments in East and Central Europe. Nationalist leaders in Ukraine could copy cultural codes of other "model" nationalisms (Anderson, 1991) as late as the early 1990s. Political and cultural dependency did not obstruct indigenous nationalist mobilization - it actually facilitated the nationalist "cause," once the state took full charge of the latter. I characterize the contemporary brand of the state-promulgated Ukrainian nationalism as

"ethno-civic" and show its intimate connection to the official policies, aimed at pleasing important domestic and international constituencies.

The last, sixth chapter of the study offers cross-cultural perspectives on the topic of Russian-Ukrainian dialogue. Having established that the Ukrainian political culture is not just a regional variety of the "bigger" Russian one, but represents a separate group of value complexes and meaning-structures, I look at the recent history of Ukrainian-Russian relations as a politically salient manifestation of this cultural specificity. Though Russia has finally started taking Ukraine seriously, Moscow still sees Ukraine as "naturally belonging" to the original Russian universe. Ukrainians, on the other hand, are intent on distancing themselves from Moscow's reintegrationist drive. The ambivalence of mutual perceptions makes one doubt whether Russian-Ukrainian relations can be finally reconfigured as truly international ones.

After laying out certain suggestions with regard to the theory of international dialogue, I proceed to the analysis of the Russian-Ukrainian nexus conceptualized as an international dialogue in the making. This type of relationship is bound to be troubled with spontaneous and semi-spontaneous lapses into the earlier stances and roles of the actors' predecessors. Residual Russian imperialism, the centre-periphery complex and the complex of inferiority toward the foreigner are pointed out as representative of the archaic and non-systemic structures in the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue.

The chapter ends with the assessment of political-cultural changes after the end of communism and the new prospects these changes portend for Ukrainian-Russian relations. It is argued that the sense of equality and complementarity of the two biggest East Slavic nations may eventually pave the way to their more amicable and mutually beneficial coexistence than heretofore contemplated. I exclude both the possibility of a sudden dramatic deterioration in inter-state relations of the two countries and the other extreme of imminent voluntary reintegration of Ukraine and Russia into some kind of a renewed Union. A full-fledged partnership between Ukraine and Russia may well be the only way to facilitate tolerance, liberalism, and democratization in the area. This partnership, however, should be based on international law and uphold Ukrainian sovereignty as that of a denuclearized and non-aligned country. Russia's respect of Ukraine's special status and Ukraine's ability to successfully deal with Russia without falling into submission to the latter will ease the

tensions betwen the two, thus fostering democracy and democratic peace in the region.

Though some aspects of Ukrainian-Russian relations remain strained even after the long-awaited bilateral Treaty on friendship and cooperation was concluded (1997), the perspectives for the future they face now look better than before. The changes in political cultures and national identities of both countries, which started to develop with the first signs of market economy and political freedom, will largely determine the mode and style of subsequent interaction between the two.

One caveat is in order. Domestic changes make only part of the national history. The other part is furnished by the forces of international politics and global political economy. The influence of the latter is felt throughout the former communist world. Internationally generated factors in postcommunist transitions merit a separate study that understandably may not be undertaken within the limits of the present work. My purpose here is to concentrate on what I believe are crucial endogenous variables in the Russian-Ukrainian field of politics, namely the political cultures and dominant nationalities of the two countries, taken, first, separately, and next, concurrently.

Chapter 1. POLITICAL CULTURE THEORIZATION: CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

As humanity throws farewell glances at the outgoing millennium, long-debated themes and theories reassert themselves with new force and intellectual clarity in the broad circle of arts and sciences claiming to represent people's awareness of themselves and the societies in which they live. The period of sustained methodological and epistemological reflection on the very foundations of contemporary social science that started with the postpositivist revelations of Thomas Kuhn (1962) and Imre Lakatos (1978) and which found new strength in the poststructuralism of M. Foucault (1972) and J. Derrida (1976), is again upon us, this time fuelled by the apparent collapse of classical Marxism and Marxist-inspired theorizing. While in the first two instances, theoretical "revolutions" occurred mostly due to the internal logic of the conceptual development of their respective mother paradigms, the last one was prompted by the events that took place in the "real world": the break-up of the Soviet Union and the end of the "world socialist system", bringing the former communist countries back into the orbit of the world capitalism, and the global shift to the right, reflecting deep-seated problems of the welfare state in all its varieties.

For political science, it has been obvious for some time that old paradigms are not working as desired, while the new ones are still inchoate. Understanding this created a typical intellectual anxiety of doing something anew without knowing how. The outcome was also predictable: relying on tested tools of analysis, while trying to propose some minor modifications to them - or boldly criticizing predecessors without generating any comparable body of knowledge to replace the discarded one. In academic discourse, the concrete form of this oscillation between tradition and innovation has been "bringing back in" or "taking back out" this or that major piece of the established intellectual equipment: the state, institutions, society, individual, or culture. Thus, G. Almond's (1990) "separate tables" metaphor, to correctly present the current predicament of the science torn among different schools, sects and paradigms, should be developed into a picture where the tables are constantly reshuffled by competing teams of movers, each with its own view on the appropriate arrangement.

It seems that, just as the previous decade saw the state and then, the institutions, "brought back in", now there is time for political culture. The concept, originally developed

in Almond and Verba's seminal study (1963), has never really gone out of academic circulation. However, political culture studies have had their ups and downs, with attitudes ranging from scornful "residual category" treatment to claims for the status of "general theory" (Ruth Lane, 1992). The immense flexibility and breadth of the concept proves it a valuable tool for political analysis dealing with fluid and yet recurring reality. In the established system of political science categories, political culture is, perhaps, the only one simultaneously generic enough to permit applications to different national settings and specific enough to be filled out with the unique, idiosyncratic characteristics of the groups studied without actually eliminating their specificity. While rational choice theories assume the decision-making process to be significantly the same in all instances and the notion of political system applies its abstract cybernetic logic to various national settings indiscriminately, political culture research still preserves some space for reflection upon the very metatheoretical rules used in each case. That is why the category is being used by practically everyone in the field of Comparative Politics, though the extent of its exploitation varies according to personal research projects and methodological emphases. Its Protean quality is largely responsible for the character of the debates on its usage, drawing attention from quarters as radically opposed as orthodox Marxism, neo-conservatism, and postmodernism. In these debates the original - behaviourist - interpretation of political culture phenomena has been seriously questioned, amended and corrected. New research strategies and new conceptualizations have been offered. However, both "old" and "new" paradigms in political culture studies are inescapably rooted in deeper sociocultural traditions of thought, which dealt with the problem of ethics of governance as early as the second millennium B.C. "Scientific" studies of a hard positivist brand rarely acknowledge their existence and never attempt to look at what those ancient traditions had to offer to their contemporaries, who struggled with essentially the same problems we are trying to address these days. We will try to close this gap, though in a sketchy manner, both to do intellectual justice to the ancient forerunners of political culture discourse, and to illuminate some long forgotten (or, quite often, consciously ignored) approaches to the ethics of governance problem, thus activating their dormant potential in contemporary debates.

Ethics of Governance in Ancient Thought: Adding to the Pre-History of Political Culture

G. Almond traces the political culture tradition to the times of antiquity, citing from Plato's "Republic" and Aristotle's "Politics" (1990: 138-39). Yet, we may not end the journey in ancient Greece and must travel further east, to India and China. In both civilizations, original contributions to the problem of the relations between political and moral order, ethics and governance, or, in contemporary terms, political culture, structure and performance, were made by indigenous thinkers: Confucius, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, Mohists, and the so-called "legalist" school in China; as well as the creators and interpreters of the Vedas, the Upanisads and the Mahabharata in India.[1] We need to remember these contributions to avoid the trap of Western ethnocentrism and to correct for chronological unilinearity in dating the tradition's beginnings. China and India aside, the Judeo-Christian tradition of thought, which bridges Eastern and Western philosophy, would also deserve a word of recognition (See Gilles, 1987; Maguire, 1993; and especially Lev Shestov's classic, 1966). The underlying principle is, that whenever the link between psychological qualities, mores, habits, or ethical beliefs, and power over people is invoked, some political-cultural contemplation, though by necessity couched in the language of the day, can be discerned.

The two, perhaps, earliest strands of thought on the problem of the relationship between power and morality can be distinguished already in the epic tales and sacred texts of the early Bronze Age. The first one attributed chieftaincy and princely power to individual qualities of a high-positioned person: to personal courage, wisdom, bravery, shrewdness and so on, with physical strength, of course, also included. We can label this one a "great man approach." It was personalistic, individual-centred, patriarchal, and oriented toward external manifestations, rather than deeper, essential qualities. The great men[2] made laws and

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[1]See Hymns from the Vedas. Trans. by A. C. Bose. London: Asia Publishing House, 1966; The Upanisads. Trans. by F. Max Müller. New York: Dover Publications, 1962; The Mahabharata. Trans. and ed. by J. A. B. van Buitenen. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973-, or any other reputable edition that gives the actual texts.

[2]Usually, they were men. Heroic women did not occur often. Perhaps the only significant exception at the time, portraying intellectually and morally independent, politically influential women is the epic Mahabharata. Among several female characters shown this way in the great epic, Pandavas' polyandrous wife, Krishna Draupadi, is one of the protagonists who actively make the story, not just participate in its development.

enforced their implementation, fought and won (or lost) wars, created kingdoms and empires, forged the characters of their respective tribes, established norms and traditions. Thus, both politics and culture were created by sheer force of a personal will. This view was unequivocally individualist, though in the pre-modern sense of the word.

The second line of thought traced success and power to the collective, aggregate qualities of a social whole, most notably to the community's habits, traditions, ethical and religious norms. Even God's sympathies were allocated to "chosen people" in return for the expected behaviour of a certain sort - the behaviour informed by collectively shared values, norms and rituals which had not been derived from a single heroic person, but which rather constituted the essential, undivided quality of a group as a community. This worldview assumed the priority of ethical values over political and personal power. In a sense, it elevated ethics over politics. In contrast to the voluntarist thrust of a great man approach, it sought to be cautiously conservative and was explicitly grounded in collective norms whose existence could not be attributed to or changed by any particular individual. The norms were God-given, taboo-bounded, ancestral, customary, at any rate, unquestioned and unquestionable. Power relations arose out of a habitual culture-specific normative context, were reinforced by it and regulated by tradition. The actual power-bearers seldom attempted any innovations in the established cultural milieu.

These two ancient ways to think about problems which in the contemporary lexicon are described as political-cultural can be variously dubbed: a "great man" approach and a "chosen people" approach; individualist and collectivist; person-centred and community-centred; voluntarist and ethical-axiological. In subsequent referral, I will use the terms interchangeably. As will be seen further, the community-centred paradigm was well established in ancient India and China. The Middle East featured a mixed type of thinking on the ethics of governance and the essence of power relationships in general. The Western tradition, from quite early on, was individual-centred, personalist and voluntarist. In its modern modification, it also exhibited supreme confidence in infallibility of human cognition. It remains essentially the same now.

A. The Indian Beginning

The great Hinduist tradition, starting with Rgveda,[3] held as a supreme maxim that political power was derivative from personal ethics, and not vice versa. In Indian religion and mythology, even gods possessed god-like powers not because they were supernatural beings, but, on the contrary, because of their exemplary following of moral axioms (dharma). "The deities ... acquired their power because they are free of love and hatred and, possessed of the power of Yoga, they sway these creatures" (MBh. 3.2.75).[4] In most schools of Indian thought, dharma is understood as a "principle that sustains society and safeguards it from being destroyed" (Sinha, 1979: 183). Accordingly, rulers abiding dharma prosper and increase their power; but those going astray are sooner or later punished by the inescapable logic of things' movement in the world. The whole Pandavas vs. Kauravas dispute personified by Yudhisthira and Duryodhana and explicated in the respective philosophies accompanying their personal quests for power, as presented in the eighteen volumes of Mahabharata, illustrates the point. For Yudhisthira ("the King Dharma"), power is a means of fulfilling ethical obligations to his people, and, in this way, to the world order at large. "I obey the Law ... not because of its rewards, but in order not to transgress the traditions and to look to the conduct of the strict" (MBh. 3.32.1). Duryodhana, to the contrary, is a highly recognizable epitome of tyrant in his outspoken egotism, ambitiousness, plain greed and unsatiable lust for power which hardly stops short of using any means deemed necessary to its satisfaction. By the nature of things, he is doomed to lose the struggle. The moral is unambiguous: "One should never take inappropriate action, thinking, `Mine is the kingdom', for lack of discipline kills a king's fortune as surely as old age kills physical beauty" (Mbh. 5.34.10).

The Mahabharata shows that individualist-egoist and traditional communitarian ways of linking political power to ethical norms and values co-existed in ancient India in the 10-7 centuries B.C.: ethics bent to serve baronial pride and personal aggrandizement - and power

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[3]Usually dated between 1500 - 1000 B. C.; considered to be the oldest compilation of hymns to gods and sacred formulas which the Aryans had developed probably before their tribes entered the Indian subcontinent. See The Hymns of Rgveda, trans. by Ralph T.H. Griffith, complete rev. and enl. ed. in 2 vols. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1987), as well as monographs by Chandra, 1980; Das, 1980; Prakash, 1966; Sircar, 1975; Solomon and Higgins, 1996.

[4]I follow the book-chapter-verse system of citation.

fully subordinate to the traditional norms of society and justified solely by the necessity to protect it from harmful alien forces. In the words of the great Indian epic, "the Law, when well protected, protects the king who guards the Law" (MBh. 3.31.5).

B. Chinese Contributions

Just as the ancient Hinduist ideas, original Chinese contributions to the problem are still inadequately recognized. The Confucian school of politics and ethics has had a higher profile, boosted recently by the debate on the relative advantages to capitalism of Confucian vs. Protestant ethics, prompted by the phenomena of the newly industrialized countries (NICs) of East and Southeast Asia. However, at least two other schools of ancient Chinese thought generated important insights in political philosophy and ethics of governance: the utilitarian Mohist school and the Taoist school, best known through the Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu manuscripts.

Confucianism unequivocally proclaimed ethics' priority over politics, but ethics itself is tradition-bound and conservatively stratified along the lines of traditional Chinese social and political structure. Thus, despite a seemingly universalist spirit, Confucius had one thing to say to a ruler, and another to a peasant. This discriminatory approach, by applying different sets of normative expectations to various strata of Chinese society, effectively tied power to social status, and the social status to concrete ways of following supposedly "eternal" principles. Clear analogies with Indian thought could be observed: vedic seers also interpreted dharma variously, when forging prescriptions for different varnas (castes) of the society. Confucian normativism went farther than Mahabharata in stressing the immutable, pre-ordained character of individual moral obligations and fixing the individual to a particular social position, without providing for any possibility of a radical change in either individual surroundings or a social system at large. In this way, it had established an exemplary pattern for subsequent brands of corporatist traditionalism and organic conservatism, enabling a present-day researcher to use it as a model for the political culture of "tory corporatism" (Stewart 64-67).

The Mohist tradition[5] marked an important departure from a corporate-bound Confucian ethics with a notion of "love without discrimination". In Mo Tzu's view, moral (and thus, steady) rulership is distinguished by a concern for people which is indiscriminate as to their social status and origin and distinctly less paternalist than the classical Confucian canon. Describing perfect kings of a mythical past, Mo Tzu observes that

> In governing the empire, they loved the people without distinction, further benefited them, and finally led the people of the empire in esteeming and exalting heaven and serving the spirits. Because they loved and benefited the people, heaven and the spirits rewarded them, enthroning them as the Son of Heaven and making them father and mother to the people. (Mo Tzu 11/9/53, cit. in Ames, 1994: 159)

The Mohist thinkers developed the ethical-axiological approach to government and governance, clearly dominant in ancient China, in a more egalitarian direction, as compared to earlier Confucian views. They also provided a link to more personalized, psychologically and individually relevant interpretations of power, advancing one of the first formulations of the principle of merit almost concurrently (in broad historical terms) with Aristotle. In contradistinction to other lines of thought in ancient China, Mo Tzu and his followers "placed greater emphasis than later Confucianists on the doctrine that men of worth should be in authority" (Lau, 1989: xiv).

Taoist ideas on the matter fall short of presenting any unified discourse whatsoever. In fact, two classic writers usually referred to for illustrations - Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu - are sometimes more distant from each other than even Mo Tzu and Confucius. Thus, Burton Watson (1964: 8) correctly noted that "Chuang Tzu's brand of Taoism, as often pointed out, is in many respects quite different from that expounded in the [Lao Tzu's] Tao-te-ching. Therefore, though the two may have drawn upon common sources and certainly became fused in later times, it seems best to consider them separately...". In addition, both texts yield interpretations of a diametrically opposed character, thus rendering the task of communicating some "genuine," uncontroversial "spirit," if not the letter, of Taoism almost

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[5]Named after the Chinese thinker Mo Tzu, or Master Mo (approx. 479 - 381 B. C., the place of birth is unclear). Originally devised as a radical alternative to the Confucian canon, Mohism fell into oblivion in later ages as something "unappealing to the members of the ruling class, the audience to which it was primarily directed" (Watson, 1967: 13).

impossible. For one illustration, the experts still cannot agree on whether good governance in Lao Tzu means a Machiavellian-like advocacy of "scheming methods" and manipulative techniques (Lau, 1989: xxxi) - or an openly anarchist defense of a "government by non-government" (Ames, 1994: 45-46).

Chuang Tzu is certainly free from allegations of the first kind. Yet, even his insistence on a hands-off approach in governance can be interpreted in a variety of ways. There is nothing close to the proto-anarchist thought in the teachings of the philosopher who described an "enlightened king" thusly:

> His achievements blanket the world but appear not to be his own doing. His transforming influence touches the ten thousand things but the people do not depend on him. With him there is no promotion or praise - he lets everything find its own enjoyment. (Chuang Tzu, 1964: 91-92)

If one cannot avoid looking for anachronistic labels, then a "classic liberalism" of almost Smithian feeling would be, perhaps, a better characterization. As a most eloquent defender of the "wu wei" (inaction) principle, Chuang Tzu would certainly have objected to the voluntarist intrusions of government upon the naturally developing forms of society. This does not mean, however, that he would seek complete elimination of any kind of guidance which, for Taoists, has deep spiritual elements to it and cannot be equated with political leadership only. While praising a primordial, peaceful "state of nature", the Chinese thinker understood perfectly well that its restoration was hardly possible, once civilization had taken root. The "wu wei" has to be accommodated to the reality. Thus, to the question "How can one govern men without positive action?", Chuang Tzu answers simply: "By doing no violence to their hearts". More specifically, he indicates that this sort of violence stems from the "theories on goodness and fairness" (Wisdom..., 1984: 160), and indeed from any artificial "knowledge" invented by those who fancy themselves able to improve on humanity's condition. Ideal rulers shall discard falsely informed activism, whose only result is increased human suffering. "For the rest, like the common practice, they are loving without affection, just without pretension, ritualistic without scrupulosity, active without fuss or ceremonies, legal without passion, devoted to the people and respectful of the rights of all" (Wisdom..., 1984: 165). Rulers' "inaction", in Taoism, is definitely something other than twiddling one's thumbs in a happy trance.

Compared to Chuang Tzu, his legendary predecessor, Lao Tzu, appears much more pragmatic and straightforward in his instructions. His principles of rulership include not only the familiar wu wei and closely related "wu ming" (anonymity), not only modesty and simplicity, but also active patronage of the subjects - ideas which gave some credence to later accusations of preaching "scheming methods" and holding the common populace in disrespect. Thus, in chapter 65, the philosopher puts it bluntly: "When people are difficult to govern, it is because they know too much. ... Keeping the people in ignorance makes for the salvation of a country" (Wisdom..., 1984: 34). Even cruder assertions can be found in chapter 3. Yet, our modern indignation may miss the point: the thoroughgoing insistence on personal disinterestedness of "the Sage" (the ruler) who simply conforms to the natural flow of things and tries to preserve that original balance of the universe which hasty actions of pretentious politicians can only put at risk. Thus,

> [t]he Sage conforms himself to the Principle [i.e., Tao]. He influences without attributing the result to himself. He accomplishes without appropriating the work to himself. He does not claim the title of Sage... (Chap. 77; Wisdom..., 1984: 38)

That is to say, an ideal Taoist ruler would not be a "great man" in the conventional sense. His activism lies not in shaping things at will, but in restoring them to their natural shape. His power is not formative, but protective. It does not transform, but it conserves and preserves. In general, he is depicted more like a wise village chieftain, if not an outright shaman, than a politician or bureaucrat, or indeed a revered emperor of Confucian tradition. Significantly, in Taoist thought the principle of meritocracy, so important for Aristotle in the West and the Mohists in the East, is noted, but ridiculed and, finally, dispensed with: there can be no other good but following the eternal Way, and therefore, an individual ruler's merits are largely irrelevant.

The political programs of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, in short, are markedly more conservative than the Confucian or the Mohist ones. If we adopt the view that a society where class distinctions are fully developed is a step forward from a primordial tribal community, then Taoism may be labelled even as a sort of reactionary utopianism. It seems that these philosophers are harking back to the Dark Ages of a primitive social structure, when quite rudimentary governance would suffice for smoothing out occasional

disturbances, and a laissez-faire approach could have been relied upon for the rest. However, there is more to it than either utopianism or the primitive anarchism of early classless societies. For one thing, Taoist "conservatism" turns Confucianism upside down, since, instead of reproducing the existing social and political structure, it calls for its elimination. Revolutionary overtones in Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu can be noted more than once. On the other hand, the Taoist utopia is not a human-constructed, not even a human-centred one. There are no "grand plans" for universal happiness hidden somewhere in these manuscripts. Any consciously built ethics is also eschewed. The closest Western analogy could be "going back to nature," as presented in J.-J. Rousseau and Henry D. Thoreau - or the postmodernist "pangaian" worldview espoused by some of the present-day ecologist thinkers, like, for example, James Lovelock (see Richardson, 1995: 7-9).

Unsurprisingly, it is quite difficult to situate Taoism in the development of the politico-culturalist tradition in unequivocal terms. The fact that this brand of philosophy had nothing to do with a voluntarist thrust of an individualistic "great man" approach hardly needs any further illustrating. However, this does not mean that Taoism can be categorized as an "ethical-axiological" sort of reflection without evoking some apparent contradictions. The most important one arises from the stubborn reluctance of the Taoist classics to advance any clearly articulated system of social and/or political values. There are no commandments in either philosophical or religious Taoism. There is but one Principle, and, by definition, it can be neither explicated nor comprehended. Rulership relies on intuition, and the closest approximation to a "commandment" might have been formulated as "do no harm". To the ongoing conversation of political cultures and political traditions Taoism contributes its "zero-ethics" of governance - which is definitely not the same as no ethics at all - and its insistence on the limited and circumscribed character of both human knowledge and human power.

While the classical Asian tradition on the whole seems to be based on the axiological approach to power phenomena, the more we move to the West, the clearer are the signs of the individualist "great man" method. Of course, intermediary links and middle-of-the-road positions abound. Already in Confucianism one can see an emphasis on not only universal moral order, but on the personal characteristics of the ruler embodying this moral order

through the process of individual self-realization. The "great man's" advantage becomes related more to his political position, than to personal qualities, in the ancient Chinese Legalism (Ames, 1994: 85ff). The "divine kings" of what is usually understood as the Asian tradition in the West may be cited as yet another example of blurred boundaries between the one and the other way of conceptualizing political power in antiquity: seeing it as an appendage to a heroic personality or tracing its roots in the anonymous soil of tradition and impersonal Law. Thus, even clearly pan-ethical, communitarian and supraindividual Hinduist thought can be read in a "great man" fashion: after all, the Pandavas are no more no less than reincarnations of the most celebrated deities, and an earthly king Krishna embodies Vishnu himself.

Yet, in my view, it would be more appropriate to talk about two Eastern traditions, instead of a single one, in the politico-philosophical reflections of antiquity. China and India represent one of them, which, despite all odds, is dominated by community-based ethics, and measures power by its relevance to the unquestioned values of the ethnocultural group. The other line of thought - more prone to individualist readings - originated in cultures of the early Middle Eastern societies.

C. Judaism and the Problem of Rulership

In Judaism, the focus of authority is the individual, rather than the community, and the single-centredness of power is underscored by the fact that the ultimate guarantor of the political sovereignty of the Hebrew people is the Lord God himself. "He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet" (Ps. 47: 3). Judaism is certainly the first and perhaps the only world religion where the power of God is understood in distinctly political terms. "When the Lord from Zion hands you the sceptre, the symbol of your power, reign in the midst of your enemies" (Ps. 110: 2. Cit. in Pelican et al, 1985: 12). The contract between God and Hebrew chieftains is personal, with obligations on both sides clearly articulated. The God of Israel behaves like a transcendent monarch, and there can be no question whether or not his power comes from his diligent following of impersonal moral norms. As the Creator and the Protector, he is the only person responsible for the actual ethical content of the covenant. Though original acceptance of a transcendent ruler had been justified by his

good performance in quasi-feudal relationships (see, e.g. Gen. 28: 20-2), from the moment the heavenly contract had been accepted, the princes of Israel could no longer attempt to re-negotiate the terms of the covenant at will. "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them" (Ps. 44: 3). The great superhuman delegates some power to the worldly great men who rule because of this suzerain-vassal-type connection, and not because of their superb qualities open to an independent judgment. Rulers in the flesh act as plenipotentiary representatives of the Deity and, in this capacity, become sacred beings themselves. Thus, "the king's personal peace and safety are essentially synonymous with the peace, safety, independence, and sovereignty of his realm" - a conjunction which has strong symbolic significance to the people at large (Rosenberg, 1986: 193).

An observation on the intrinsically individualist, ruler-centred, if not outright authoritarian, character of the political culture espoused by the Bible of Moses, the Pentateuch, is not refuted by comments indicating that "in the ancient kingdom of Israel at least four elite political cultures were in conflict..." (Almond, 1990: 138). All of them referred to an individual God as the paramount leader of the people. Even if we accept George Mendenhall's "peasant revolt" theory, so popular in contemporary liberation theology (Gottwald, 1983: 186-7, 304ff), and trace two drastically opposed trajectories of political culture development in ancient Israel, relating one of them to the "royal" and the other to the "liberation", or "Mosaic" traditions (Brueggeman, 1983), we still cannot ignore the authoritarian flavour present in both of them. While the Davidic interpretation of the Torah undoubtedly comes closer to the traditionally totalizing discourse of other Middle Eastern religions - Egyptian specifically - the Mosaic and, later, prophetic alternatives cannot be fully spared its influence either. Perhaps the law of the Covenant had revolutionized early Hebrew society, providing the means to protect it from the arbitrariness of tyrannical city-kings, as the adherents of "liberation" interpretation would like to think. However, since the Covenant itself had been treated as the source of ultimate authority which was not open to any public contestation, its most significant impact on the life of society could be described as replacing earthly despots with the heavenly one. The authoritarian discourse apparently dominates the

Abraham cycle, even if both royal and confederate traditions of Israel's polity may be discerned there (Rosenberg, 1986: 88-92). Finally, prototypic accounts of the structure and nature of a single-centred, divine authority are fully articulated in Genesis 1-3: in the story of Adam who is consistently depicted "as viceroy of Creation" and attributed a kind of "corporate self assumed by the king in coronation" (Rosenberg, 1986: 195).

D. Ethics and Politics in Christianity

If Judaism stands right in the middle of the political-cultural intersection bridging Asian collectivism and Western individualism, Christianity crosses the bridge to the other side, representing community itself as a sum of relatively independent, though interconnected individuals. Original Christian thought radically de-politicizes ethical problematic that was first comprehended and holistically postulated in Indian and Chinese traditions. The latter often regarded individual ethical perfectionism as a means of achieving power over people and things. Thus, ethics was "spoiled" by politics. Only Taoism of the Chuang Tzu variety insisted on a radical disentangling of politics and ethics, underscoring the priority of ethics. Christianity not only repeats this crucial step, but also moves the focus of attention away from the traditional community (the people of Israel) and puts the individual directly in the spotlight of discourse.

As many scholars have noted, the New Testament contains quite contradictory positions on government and political authority: some texts can be interpreted as government-affirmative (Rom. 13: 1-7; 1 Pet. 2: 13-17; 1 Tim. 2: 1-4; Titus 3: 1), while others regard it critically and plainly negatively (1 Cor. 6: 1-6; 2: 6-8; Mark 10: 42-45; Matt. 4: 8-10; Luke 4: 5-8; Eph. 6: 12; Rev. 13). Understandably, this complicates the task of an interpreter (see Swartley, 1983: 31). The problem, however, is not the attitude to government per se. Christianity inaugurated the first non-nationalist, non-racial and explicitly cosmopolitan view of the human community. No wonder this message had been vehemently rejected "by the racial-national Israel" (Talbert, 1983: 101).

Secondly, the Christian understanding of the nature of earthly authority, in its various manifestations - political or religious - can be read in clear contradistinction to all previously known philosophies of either status-based or merit-based government. The assumption of

individual merit as the chief consideration in civil service recruitment and promotion was central to Confucian political theory. Both Judean theocracy and Judean partisanship, though mixing merit, charisma and privileged kinship lineages (e.g., Davidic or Zadokite), still distinguished those better suited to exercise governance from others, better suited to follow the leaders. In early Chrisitianity, there is no one more or less privileged, in terms of social status or individual merit, to serve God or to exert spiritual guidance over others. Even a social outcast may join the group of leaders (Levi, the tax collector), and even the most hated - ethnoculturally - may be accepted in the spiritual kingdom (Samaritans: Luke 10: 25-37, 17: 11-19; Acts 9: 31).

The third important dimension, underscored by Richard Cassidy (1978: 75), concerns New Testament ideas on power as service to the people, and a certain humility on the part of a ruler as a pre-condition for this service. These themes, when attended by the belief that "human nature itself has a radical dignity" (O'Toole, 1983: 13) mark a drastic departure from more conventional political ideas drawn from either Oriental or Occidental sources. In fact, their potential remains challenging and inspiring even for contemporary postmodernist and postliberal political discourse.[6]

Christianity defies the "great man" approach even when and where it could be most expected: in the narratives specifically related to Jesus, his teachings, his personality and behaviour. Jesus' personal qualities, his position vis-à-vis the authorities, modesty and humility in both his ministry and behaviour all run contrary to the established stereotypes of a great leader, chieftain, warrior or even high priest. On the other hand, Christianity revolutionizes the very understanding of the community. After stripping it of all the ethnic, racial or social markers it has in Hindu, Confucian, Judean or ancient Greek traditions, it lays bare the foundations of this community in personal relations. With previously unseen force, Christianity reasserts the right and obligation of individual choice in matters of power, authority, social and political behaviour. It creates a purely ethical community through the appeal to universal human nature, rather than its culture-bound, space- and time-limited manifestations. At least, this is the logic of the message, and I will not deal in detail with its

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[6]On Christianity as a potentially viable basis for the postmodern civic culture see Bridges, 1994, ch. 5.

historically limited implementations.

Medieval debates on the priority of "God-given" spiritual Church power over the mundane "caesarian" power of princes, or vice versa, echoed the same old voluntarist versus traditionalist juxtaposition. Contributions to centuries-long discussions are too many to cite even the most prominent participants. In a nutshell, however, the "princely" party supported voluntarist interpretations of both the essence of power (which had been understood primarily as the "power of the sword") and the origins of culture (traditions, laws, customs) that had been presumed to bear the indelible marks of the personality of a ruler. Of course, the dominant religious "epistemic community" could not permit any challenging of fundamentals, so the exceptional qualities of a prince or an emperor were themselves interpreted as a gift from heaven. The "clergy" party tried to link power over the soul with power over the body, and supported the Church's pretensions to earthly power, relegating princes in a this-world hierarchy to a position somewhere below bishops. Since the Church had been praised primarily for being a conduit for the ancient sacred wisdom and rituals, as well as for its mediatory role in the ongoing dialogue between humanity and the Almighty, polemics of this kind not only served the political interests of bishops, but, in effect, advanced an ethical-axiological understanding of the political system in general.

Interestingly enough, in its obsession with princely power, the medieval Church defied the famous dictum: "render the things of Caesar to Caesar and the things of God to God" (Matt. 22: 21). To justify the activist stance, clerical writers invented the theory of "two swords" (see Luke 22: 38; cf. also Matt. 26: 51-53), arguing that political governance should have been regarded as a double-edged phenomenon: the princely "sword" of physical power and coercion had to be complemented by the clerical "sword" of spiritual power and ideological domination. Thus, medieval political teachings already distinguished two forms of power in governmental process: politics and ideology, coercion and domination, or, in Gramscian terms, domination and hegemony. This important insight, with an emphasis on the latter term of the dyad, grew and developed in finer distinctions, culminating in the "Knowledge is Power" dictum at the dawn of the Enlightenment.

If Christianity had largely structured European thinking in medieval ages, the modern times began with severe abrogation of all the religious prejudices. Politics was finally

liberated from theology. Theology itself was deemed marginal to the affairs of society. In the opinion of all too many early modern thinkers, religiously inspired ethics could not deserve a better fate either. Unfortunately, more often than not it meant repudiation of any ethics whatsoever. Proud and seemingly convincing assertion – "anything is possible" – guided the epoch.

E. The Age of Reason

To the Enlightenment thinkers, the problem of culture was represented mostly as a problem of mores, traditions and customs. Education was considered the best way to change both the people and the government. If knowledge was power, then power itself had to be understood as predominately the authoritative knowledge. Imperfect culture and arbitrary government had to be transformed according to the plan envisioned by human intelligence. Whatever civilization had been already created was more often than not also regarded as the conscious product of human genius, as something intended, planned in advance and realized with full awareness of the goals thought and means applied. This understanding is evident in Hobbes, in Locke, in Rousseau, in all social contract theories of the time. Even for those writers who, like Helvetius and other French materialists, treated all social qualities as nothing more than "the development of corporeal sensibility" (Helvetius, 1969: 135n), there had been no doubts about either the feasibility or the desirability of improving the human condition through the conscious interventions of adequately informed and benevolent rulers. What in contemporary terminology would have been dubbed as political culture was assumed to be almost infinitely malleable at the hands of a government, and whatever disagreements on political and moral issues had been noticed among the people were said to result from sheer misunderstanding. Thus, for the Enlightenment thinkers,

> [I]t is the understanding that turns everything to profit, that arranges everything, that acts, directs, and rules: everything else is blind, deaf, and soulless. (Montaigne, 1963: 57)

From whence both the task of philosophers and the task of rulers followed: the former were obliged to clarify cognitive and ideologically induced confusions which shaded the "natural" interest of the people, while the latter had only to implement the uncovered truths in the real process of governance. Underlying the whole edifice was an optimistic notion of human

nature and its immanent inclination to the good. Once artificial obstacles to happiness were abolished, there should have been but one, singular political culture based on humanism and justice:

> The words once defined, a question is resolved almost as soon as proposed: which proves, that all minds are just, and all perceive the same relations between the same objects; a proof that in morality, politics, and metaphysics (...), the diversity of opinions is the mere effect of the uncertain signification of words, of the abuse that is made of them, and perhaps of the imperfection of languages. (Helvetius, 1969: 204)

Strangely enough, in their insistence on the liberating powers of education, which was supposed to make politics as lucid as classic geometry, in their uncompromised defence of rational self-interest and patriotic, merit-based government, the Encyclopedists, together with their immediate predecessors - late Renaissance thinkers - managed to contribute to that very view of power which they attacked as despotic and irrational.

With new beliefs in the strength of human cognition and human powers in general, voluntarist interpretations of the essence of governance were able to beat all kinds of traditional normative opposition: ethical, religious, conventional communal and even - to some extent - the "natural right" views. Machiavelli's "Prince" even now stands as an epitome of the "great man" approach to politics and society. At least three centuries before Nietzsche, the "love of power", "will to power" or "desire of power" was said to constitute the main, if not the only, driving force behind all human behaviour and interaction. From here, it followed that politics made societies, and not the opposite. What had started as the defence of reason in general, ended up as the defence of a particularist, parochial reason of rulers: not necessarily monarchs but governmental elites for sure. For French philosophes in particular, democracy, in its modern understanding, had been rather a sign of decay in governance than the desired form of it. Baron d'Holbach summarized the attitude which prevailed among the Encyclopedists without much hesitation:

> In a word, wherever the people possesses power, the state carries within it the principle of its destruction. Liberty degenerates into license, and anarchy follows. Furious in adversity, insolent in prosperity, proud of its power, surrounded by flatterers, a multitude knows no moderation; it is ready to receive impressions of all those who make the effort to deceive it; barely held back by the bonds of decency, it acts without reflection or shame; it inclines toward the most shameful crimes, the most shocking excesses. (La Politique

naturelle 2: 240; quoted in Payne, 1976: 166).

The "civic culture" propounded by most of the Enlightenment thinkers had little to do with democracy: it merely aimed at rationalizing social and political hierarchies, educating the rulers, and controlling the subjects by means more humane (or, sometimes, less humane, but more technically "rational": cf. Bentham's Panoptikon) than previously accepted.

When politics was finally freed from the clerical grip, certain important mechanisms that had kept princely power in check were also lost. Sociologically speaking, the church as an institution was reduced to the position of no independent political significance, leaving the state as the monopolist of power vis-á-vis a young, fragmented, and often feeble civil society. In psychocultural terms, the Christian message of humility and service to the people, once abandoned in favour of Greco-Roman civil patriotism and the masculinist concept of "virtue", gave way to Promethean pride and the conviction that "everything is possible", that is, everything is within the reach of the insightful and properly motivated political elite. It was quite logical to conclude that "with the forms of government of Rome and Sparta, Romans and Spartans might still be produced; and, in short, by a sagacious distribution of rewards and punishments ... the interest of individuals may be always united with that of the public, and the people compelled to be virtuous..." (Helvetius, 1969: 187n). One might be tempted to observe with hindsight that either on the issue of political socialization - pictured as an interplay of stimuli and reactions - or on the political culture issue in general, contemporary behaviourism was predated by some two hundred years by the French Enlightenment thinkers.

This view on the possibility to compel people to be good has brought more disasters on humanity than any previous religious or ideological doctrine. The belief in the omnipotence of human reason has already cost immense losses in both natural and social environments. Yet, people have to rely on their reasoning to orient themselves in the world, and this creates a chance to fall back into the same trap of blind pride and confidence that may easily cause the end of human civilization the next time we get into it.

Modern History of the Political Culture Concept: Levels of Theorization

The centuries-old tradition of thought that presaged modern political culture research generated important ideas and insights which still hold the attention of the scholarly

community. We may find them echoed in Almond and Verba's study (1963), as well as in the most recent publications on the subject (Bridges, 1994; Cecil et al., 1994; Coyle and Ellis, 1994; Franklin and Baun, 1995; Gibbins, 1989; Honneth et al, 1992; Welch, 1993, etc.). In all variety of classifications and typologies, it is possible to distinguish individual-centred, psychologistic, more or less voluntaristic interpretations, together with those also known from antiquity: ethical, axiological, society- or community-centred theories. In basic epistemological categories, materialist and idealist approaches to political culture are as visible now as in the not-so-distant time when neo-Kantian Kulturwissenschaft ("the science of culture") was first counterposed to Marxism. The lately oft-cited interpretivist, or phenomenological "third way" (Welch, 1993, ch. 6; Street, 1993: 101), in fact, boils down to either of the previous two, being therefore a clear misnomer in its pretensions to rise above the initial pair of epistemological opposites.

Sociologically-based classifications of political culture theories reveal the preferred unit of study: from the individual to the society as a whole to a particular segment of the society, be it its language, institutional structure, customs and traditions, norms, etc. On one hand, it is a familiar level of analysis problem, or the search for the appropriate allocation of dependent and independent variables characterizing such a complex object of investigation as the political culture of a given society. On the other hand, the very choice of independent or explanatory variables presupposes some basic metatheoretical understanding of the nature of social reality in all its manifestations, not limited to, or circumscribed by political culture phenomena. From this point of view, we can distinguish between methodological individualist and holistic positions in the social sciences. Methodological individualists reduce all societal aggregates to what they consider to be their fundamental "constructive" units: individual people, their consciousness, behaviour, activities and interaction. All holistic approaches are, on the contrary, guided by the presumption that "the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts" which develops into a conviction that aggregate, or synthetic, qualities of the group cannot be fully represented by its individual members taken separately or in arbitrary combinations.

A. "Structure" versus "Psychology"

Strictly speaking, all the diversity of currently circulating political culture definitions and ways of theorization falls into one of the rubrics created by the juxtaposition of these broad epistemological and sociological categories. Political culture can be studied on either "atomic" (individual) or "aggregate" (group, societal) levels, and it can be explained as either objective or subjective phenomena. Sometimes researchers address the problem as that of a choice between the political and social "structure" and "psychology", arguing that "culture" has to be found somewhere in between (Dittmer, 1977: 581-82). In fact, the accent on structure alone cannot guarantee against either idealistic or psychologically reductionist interpretations. A psychologically-laden picture of social structure itself, and the structure of political authority in particular, is presented by none other than the undisputed forefather of contemporary structural-functionalist analysis, Max Weber, who happened to be less rigid in drawing conceptual boundaries than present-day social scientists. In Weber's own words (1968: 263),

> In general, it should be kept clearly in mind that the basis of every authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige.

By the same token, those interpretations of culture that draw mostly on psychology can be easily structuralized, as witnessed in the work of E. Durkheim (1951) and C. Lévi-Strauss (1963; 1966). Without confusing the logical bases of different classifications, one would have to refer, for example, to "methodological individualist, subjectivist" theories of political culture instead of currently used "psychological accounts" (Gibbins, 1989: 3) or "psychologistic approaches" (Ruth Lane, 1992: 362). The "structuralist" conceptualizations, usually counterposed to them, deserve somewhat more precise characterization as well, since under the guise of superficial similarities here one may find paradigms as distinct as Marxist historical-materialist, Saussurean or Wittgensteinian structural-linguistic, cultural anthropological (Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Geertz, 1973), system-structural (Easton, 1971), neo-structuralist (Giddens, 1987) and even poststructuralist (Bourdieu, 1977; Derrida, 1976; Foucault, 1972; Lyotard, 1989).

However, to group various definitions in terms of their actual content, which is a less methodologically stern way to look at them, we still may have to use overlapping, approximate descriptive characteristics, where "psychological" is usually reserved for

individual psychology, "ethical" and "axiological" for regulative structures in social, or group psychology, and "sociological" or "behavioral" means talking about actual behaviour and not just consciousness, and so on. The battery of thus understood nominational conceptualizations (since they are essentially based on selective nominations of some phenomena which a researcher deemed worthy to represent political culture) includes also "national character" and "national morale" studies (Morgenthau, 1962: 126-39), "psychocultural" approaches (Richard Solomon, 1971); "political symbolist" and "political communicative" suggestions (Dittmer, 1977); theories of "cultural rationality" (Wildavsky, 1987); ethnographic-anthropological; normative; linguistic; semiotic; ideal-typical and other equally particularist accounts. The common feature of all classifications attempting to group these various descriptive categories of political-cultural studies together is the absence of a logically uncontroversial, unequivocally defined set of criteria which would allow drawing typologies on the same level of abstraction in order to establish some clearly demarcated plane of comparison between classifications.

There are researchers who denounce the very necessity of such an endeavour. In their view, the internal complexity of the field would render any such an attempt hardly feasible (Welch, 1993: 1-13). Without denying some merit to this argument, I would contend that striving for logical clarity and avoiding ambiguity in either theories' classification or an individual theory's internal structure is in itself an important scholarly task. It enables a researcher to comprehend the current state of the field and take note of theoretical instruments used in its advancement with more precision than could be otherwise possible. It allows one to see not only the impressionistic collage of various approaches tried and definitions used, but actually some system behind seemingly unaligned theorizations suggested by different writers. From this point of view, all nominational conceptualizations, despite their glaring diversity and inconsistency, answer the same research question: how is political culture represented to us? - or, somewhat differently, - what are its intellectually discernible manifestations? Clearly, this question is not the same as: what is the essence of political culture? (materialist-idealist divide); or who is its real-world carrier? (level-of-analysis controversies in terms of broadly stated sociological categories of individual, group, nation, humanity as a whole).

The issue of representation can be addressed variously, depending on theoretical context and the nature of discussion. Recently, it has been monopolized by the postmodernist school, or rather postmodernist vogue, since it is truly hard to speak about the "school" when people who are supposed to belong to it vehemently reject its very existence for the fear of any unified strand of theory. Nevertheless, there is something all of them have in common, which can be seen, in particular, in their treatment of the issue of social and theoretical representation. Looking into various accounts of representation and comparing them to each other may help to distinguish postmodernist understandings of the problem from more conventional rationalist standpoints.

For the postmodern writers, representation means any kind of discourse practices, together with artifacts created, taken from the side of form as much as from the side of content. Representation expresses human subjectivity, but not an "independent" reality. It eschews any "correct" description, but is open to multiple exegetic readings. In short, it is something given as an aesthetic, rather than scientific, fact (Lyotard, 1989: 155-68). Postmodernist accounts of representation touch upon symbolic manifestations of individual subjectivity without claiming any generalized significance for them. They never pretend to see the culture, or even simply culture, as a social environment behind the web of individual activities. Any such an attempt would be immediately classified as an "essentialist" error with potentially "totalizing" repercussions.

Conventional rationalist epistemology, which guides mainstream political science today, just as it had in the times of Aristotle, Hobbes, or Montesquieu, accepts quite an opposite view. In fact, it had never attempted to rise "above" the essentialist position, since this would have amounted to abandoning any claims to scientifically "true" knowledge whatsoever. For the same reason, mainstream political science could not be interested in individual subjective expressions as they were, without constantly relating them to broader social trends and issues of generalized significance. Postmodernist theorization, despite all its pretensions to originality, clearly follows the phenomenological tradition in its concentration on the intrinsic value of unique and isolated phenomena. Conventional scientific epistemology usually seeks to find some common ground beneath those phenomena. It applies unified methods of analysis to seemingly unrelated manifestations in

order to dissect them down to their elementary "building blocks" which are assumed to be constitutive of more complex social and cultural formations. This way, however, may be potentially hazardous, since academic instruments and analytical constructs tend to be confused with real-world objects. Thus, in conventional academic discourse, representation is often understood structurally, which means that, for an average mainstream researcher, considering how political culture should be represented in theory is tantamount to establishing its real structural elements. Three questions coalesce in one problem: what propositions are to be used to conceptualize political culture? how does political culture manifest itself in reality? and what social objects pertain to its inner workings? Nominational definitions become at once phenomenological and substantialist accounts. The analysis of this kind not only begins, but also ends with representation, scratching the political culture surface (usually on one side) without attempting to penetrate deeper into its structural complexity. Stephen Welch's critique of structuralism makes a point that is relevant to all nominational conceptualizations pretending to locate a "prime element" of political culture in this or that "representative" part of it: all of them offer some presumably conclusive "collective representations" simultaneously eschewing an "investigation of whether anything is represented to anybody", the researcher herself included (1993: 140).

B. Behaviourism and Its Structuralist Critics

For Almond and Verba, political culture refers to "specifically political orientations - attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system" (1963: 13). It was a strictly methodological individualist and psychologistic definition. It was also idealist, because, first, the political system was believed to be "embedded" in political culture, and not vice versa (Almond, 1956: 396), and, second, political culture was further described as "psychological orientation toward social objects ... the political system as internalized in the cognitions, feelings, and evaluations" of the people (emphasized by Almond and Verba, 1963: 14). The "internalized" political system is nothing other than an ideal political system, or the mental image of the political system that shapes people's psychology on its different - cognitive, emotional, and judgmental levels, but has little truck with their actual political behaviour. The latter, for obvious reasons, may not simply duplicate ideal images, personal ideas and emotions. Almond and Verba failed to

explicate links between political consciousness and political behaviour; they failed even from a psychologistic point of view, since their three-tiered battery of psychological orientations did not include, for example, subconscious elements or such an important complex as individual and collective volitions, or motivations to action.

As critics noted quite early, behaviourism, in its Almondian form, has been really a study of individual attitudes, and not individual behaviour. More specifically, it involved something close to plain public opinion surveys, presented under the label of "political culture research". Operationalization problems haunted the project from the very beginning. The main one, of course, had to do with legitimizing attitudes and orientations, psychological phenomena in general, as true indicators of political culture. In fact, functionalist behaviourists made even more sweeping statements, arguing that we should regard these as not only indicators, but core elements of the "real thing". This means that psychology is not just a key to political culture, but is culture in the strictest meaning of the term. "Despite the large variety of meanings attached to the concept," writes Harry Eckstein, "before and since, 'psychological' (that is, subjective) orientation has always been central in the idea of culture" (Eckstein, 1992: 288).

Even if this has been so, which is, at very least, disputable, why should it follow that individual psychology provides the best answers we need? Political culture is, by definition, a collective phenomenon; its explanatory power is sought to clarify power-related matters of collective behaviour and interaction; why bother to look for its constructive elements inside personal consciousness? The accent on individuals defies the very essence of the functionalist project which is supposed to address the existence of political culture on a system level, showing whether it is functional or dysfunctional for the political system at large. Operationalization problems flowing from the choice of individual-level variables for system-level explanations get only further complicated with any attempt at synthetic aggregation of the data obtained for deliberately disaggregated variables. Just as the phenomenon of crowd can never be explained by particular thoughts and emotions of individuals who constitute it - or even by the sum total of their individual psychologies - political culture cannot be understood via its individual representations only. And, returning to the issue of representation, the question still remains whether the most representative of

political-cultural individual phenomena should be pinpointed in: (a) psychology - and not behaviour; (b) consciousness - and not material artifacts; (c) subjective orientations - and not objective positions in social relations and power structures.

Traditional functionalist accounts of political culture were promptly faulted for their psychological reductionism. The most influential criticisms came from cultural anthropologists, structuralists, system theorists and phenomenologists. Cultural anthropologists were among the first to react. Some of them proposed explicit remedies to the shortcomings of functionalist behaviourism; most others, however, simply pursued alternative paths of research. The immediate cure against subjective idealism lurking in empiricist theorizations was found in adding actual behaviour to psychological orientations and attitudes (Billington, 1966; Geertz, 1973; Christel Lane, 1981; Tucker, 1987). Political culture of a given society was presented as a sum of rites and rituals, modes of behaviour and accompanying belief systems - a picture quite different from the tripartite Almondian scheme of knowledge, feelings and judgments supposedly guiding behaviour. Behaviour has not been just added; it has been emphasised as a key object of the political culture study. Simultaneously, the level of discussion shifted from individual to community and society as a whole. With this move, not only the character of data had to change, but modes of observation changed as well. The researcher could no more rely on introspective reports and self-assessments, by necessity tolerated in survey-based studies. Instead, she had to look for objectively registered behavioral and interactional manifestations, and to interpret them systematically, relying upon deep intimate knowledge of the inner workings of the society studied.

Structuralist critiques varied in accent, scope and direction. In The Civic Culture Revisited (Almond and Verba, 1980) two brands of contemporary structuralism are exemplified by the essays of Carole Pateman and Jerzy Wiatr. For Pateman, who argues from the position of Weberian structuralism, psychological attitudes are nothing more than relational occurrences and thus cannot be presented as something truly independent in either the theoretical or practical sense of the word. As a part of a bigger structure, attitudes should be tied to socioeconomic positions and gender roles; political activities reflect these fundamental social divisions: "The aggregation of individual correlates of political activity

will not illuminate the relationship between political structures because the basic problem, the fact that the structure is grounded in class and sex divisions, never appears as such" (Pateman, 1980: 98). In short, political culture may not be even analytically separated from its structural referents or its media in societal practices. Pateman presents a classical point of sociological pluralism. She confronts the psychological reductionist standpoint, demonstrating the interconnectedness of factors.

Not quite so proceeds Wiatr - one of the better known representatives of the orthodox Marxist tradition. For him, political culture cannot be adequately understood without devoting specific attention to social and economic infrastructure of a society. In Marxist terms, it is this political-economic "base" and the pattern of class roles resting upon it that define political culture. Material socioeconomic relations serve as a central independent variable for political culture research, just as they do for social sciences in general. Political institutions mediate between the economic realm and class structure, on one hand, and the ideational functioning of culture, on the other.

It should be noted, however, that so-called "orthodox" Marxism, as developed in former socialist countries after the demise of classic Stalinist regimes, that is, since the late 1950s, had been unable to come anywhere close to the solid ideological and theoretical consensus erroneously assumed by Western scholars. Thus, many Polish political scientists were, in fact, following subjective, psychologistic definitions of political culture, accepting positions similar to the original Almond and Verba view of the problem. Jerzy Wiatr himself initially differed only in adding behaviour to individual psychological phenomena; his 1977 definition of political culture included "knowledge of politics, evaluation of political events, emotional aspects of political attitudes and modes of political behaviour" (see Kerimov, 1979: 128). Ukrainian scholars argued that

> Political culture is such a part of the general system of culture which is directly interwoven in political relations, political life of society, nations, classes, parties, social groups and individuals. Being a superstructural phenomenon, it manifests itself as the society's political experience, incarnated and fixed in the political system, laws and certain norms, and contained in traditions, customs, habits; as a level of knowledge that subjects of political creativity have about politics and power, the character of their political orientations, convictions and actions. (Nadolnyi, 1984: 32. Trans. mine)

This definition tends to be more on a cultural anthropologist side: it speaks about collective experience of society, traditions, customs and universal norms, rather than individual orientations, as main components of the political culture system. Russian scholars, for their own part, had lively debates on whether political culture should be perceived as a part of "spiritual culture" of a society - or, in broader terms, as a specifically political subsystem of culture in general, the latter being defined as "everything produced by a man in the process of his material and spiritual activity" (Mezhuev, 1966: 7n). Even when culture was equated with "spiritual culture" alone, it was not the same as pushing it out into the realm of ideas. In fact, spiritual culture was further concretized as "production, distribution and consumption of spiritual values", as a "singular process of creation and appropriation of all the spiritual wealth of a society". The gist of the argument stressed the dynamic nature of culture, as opposed to its thing-like objectified representations:

> Spiritual culture cannot, therefore, be equated with the sum of already accomplished results of people's spiritual activity, with plain total of spiritual values. What is lost in this case is the historical character of culture, its understanding as that of a complex societal process which is performed in historically defined forms of production. ((Mezhuev, 1966: 33. Trans. mine)

Marxian economistic structuralism influenced this approach on a far deeper level than simple juxtaposition of "material" practices of "social being" and their "ideal" reflections in "social consciousness".

For Soviet Marxists, culture had rarely been just "consciousness". More often, it was perceived as practices of a specific kind - distinguished by their unique objects, goals, interests satisfied, instruments of action used, and the character of activities themselves. What went under the guise of "official" Marxism in reality hid tacit battles between structural-functionalist and phenomenological-personalist reinterpretations of Marxist heritage, both usually delivered in the same or almost the same jargon and rooted in different exegeses of the same classic texts. In the last years of Soviet regime, structuralist and structural-functionalist theorizations made important advances, especially in political science and sociology. The issues in political culture theorization were complemented by various attempts to solve operationalization problems, introduce statistical methods, expert estimates, and comparative methods in research design and implementation. The category of political

culture was usually concretized through such notions as traditions, ideology, and modes of political behaviour. It was suggested, for example, to further operationalize behaviour as "the style of political leadership and stable political orientations of citizens, that are manifested in their attitudes toward one's personal role in political life and dispositions towards its main structural elements: constitution and the system of law, official ideology, government and its course of action, existing procedures and principles of decision-making, local authorities, etc." (Kalenskii, 1977: 171). If anything, this operationalization strategy repeats the original Almond and Verba definition almost verbatim. Marxist materialist structuralism in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe, especially in the USSR, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary, showed a clear tendency to blend with Almondian structural-functionalism, respectively incorporating all the familiar vices of psychological reductionism, excessive reliance on statistical methods and so on. However, there were other developments in structuralist analysis of political culture that also demonstrated unprecedented rapport between contemporary Russian and Western scholars working, essentially, under the same metatheoretical assumptions.

The separate strand of structuralism, gaining increasing popularity through the last two decades, has been based on the theory of structural linguistics, or semiotics, as originally created by F. de Saussure (1959). His Russian followers included such names as Mikhail Bakhtin (1993), Vladimir Propp (1968), Yu. M. Lotman (1984; 1990) and subsequent interpreters. The Western branch of the same tree grew through the important contributions of the later Ludwig Wittgenstein (1984) and the works of Peter Winch (1987), J. L. Austin (1962), and the whole Oxford analytical school. Neither Russian nor British original linguistic theorists had ever claimed any political science laurels. However, both groups worked productively in the area of culture studies, acknowledging, as a basic staple in social and political relations, the fact of a "common subscription to a language, to some rules of life, some techniques of discourse and debate, and a practice or `going on'" (Gibbins, 1989: 6). The concerted efforts to use methods of linguistic structuralism in political culture studies were undertaken recently by the students of political symbolism (Dittmer, 1977), political communication and meaning-giving (Pekonen, 1989), community leadership and association (Buker, 1987), ideological layers of mass culture and media (Merelman, 1991).

In each of these cases, Western linguistic structuralists, just like their Russian colleagues, assumed that

> [I]t is not the sign itself that lies at the center of analysis, but the system of signs and the structural relationship between them. ... Given this approach, the content of a sign comes down to its structural value; and this is determined by its place in the system... [Such an understanding] affords the hope of reconstructing extratextual empirical reality by means of the text. ... Reality in its turn is perceived as a text (of a lower level) that also must be decoded. (Lotman and Uspenskii, 1984: x).

From here, it is not hard to trace some threads of intellectual continuity to the philosophers and students of culture variously labelled "poststructuralist", "postmodernists", "deconstructionists", "grammatologists" and so on. Before doing this, however, we need to address more conventional categories of political culture theorization, some of which continue the tradition of nominational operationalizations of the term, while some others receive their name from their epistemological thrust and reliance on a particular school in social philosophy.

It will be appropriate to present contemporary axiological conceptualizations first, in order to complete the concise overview of the theories that attempt to approach political culture through the analysis of its content. When political culture is defined axiologically, the accent is placed on values, sometimes - values and norms, prescriptions and proscriptions of an ethical character. In twentieth-century thought, this approach has been initiated by neo-Kantian Kulturphilosophie (E. Cassirer, E. von Hartmann, A. Schweitzer, O. Spengler et al.). For Emile Durkheim, culture was also best understood "in terms of the consensual or dominant values and norms embedded in society" (Gibbins, 1989: 3).

Early behaviourist research was not alien to axiological and normative connotations of the concept of political culture, as witnessed by Samuel H. Beer (1958) and others who argued that political aspects of the general system of culture "are especially concerned with how government ought to be conducted and what it should try to do" (Beer et al., 1958: 12). In the volume he co-edited with Lucien Pye, Sidney Verba (1965) moved from his original functionalist behaviourist stance somewhat closer to normativism and axiology which was apparently influenced by the European tradition of culture studies. By 1965, he defined political culture as "existential beliefs, general values that set the goals of behaviour, norms

that regulate the means used to achieve goals, as well as emotional attachments" (Verba, 1965: 517). Axiological theorizations inspired William Bluhm's book on the interplay of political culture and ideology, where a keen distinction between values and beliefs was acknowledged and carried through:

> In contrast to conceptions of authority and of purpose, which, as "values", refer to what "ought" to be, "beliefs" designate what "is" - or rather, what people take to be the reality which surrounds them. ... "Beliefs" thus often form the ground for the adoption of one or another system of "values". (Bluhm, 1974: 7)

Just as other axiologists, Bluhm perceives values as ideational formations of a higher order, occupying a privileged position in the political culture hierarchy and being able to influence lower-level beliefs and attitudes. More recently, the ethical content of political culture has been stressed and explored with empirical data-sets from Great Britain. Richard Topf, among other researchers, depicted political culture as a part of the "moral order" of a society. Attacking the naive rationalist assumptions of behaviourist studies, he argued that responses to survey questions should be "interpreted as expressions of `values', or better, of positions in the moral order, constitutive of the political culture" (Topf, 1989: 67). With this turn, as John Street observed, political culture becomes "something lived and not just held" (1993: 103). It influences action on both rational and subrational levels of ethical consciousness, providing an agent with a framework of worldview principles, enabling to tell right from wrong, thus shaping political and moral identities of the people.

C. Phenomenology: The "Third Way"?

Ethical and axiological theorization in general more than tangentially intersects with the school that completes our brief overview of academically established traditions in the studies of political culture. Sometimes looked upon as a "third way" between materialism and idealism (Street, 1993: 101), this approach has been christened as "interpretivist", "hermeneutic", "ethnomethodological", or "phenomenological". Perhaps phenomenology supplies a better, more specific name to differentiate it from its rivals.

Phenomenologists assert the intersubjective and process-like character of meaning. Disregarding more minute distinctions among various phenomenological subschools and sects, they all agree on the notion of social life as creative construction and reconstruction

of the conditions of human interaction and existence. Importantly, interaction goes first, in terms of abstract ontological priority; the very existence - as human, social existence - comes second. Society and behaviour in phenomenology cannot be accorded such a significance as they receive in positivist theorizing: both are submerged under the all-encompassing Husserlian rubric of Lebenswelt (lifeworld), which, in its own turn, is presented as something eternally dynamic, constituted in human communication and lived through in constant interchange with other participants. Since individuals engage themselves in various pursuits and interactions, lifeworlds are multiple, subjectively meaningful and value-laden. They are touched by individual consciousness, but existing as something real, which cannot be altered through individual imagination only. As an intersection point for various practices and various forms of communication, lifeworld is neither subjective nor objective in the sense of traditional epistemological divisions. It is inter-subjective, and, as such, it is an epitome for culture.

No wonder Stephen Welch considers phenomenological readings as revealing "the most useful potential of the concept of political culture" (1993: 117). Phenomenology promises understanding of meanings hidden in cultural "texts" (values, symbols, practices) not by means of esoteric exegesis performed by a uniquely insightful researcher, but by means of their social and practical reconstruction, i. e. tracing the origins of meanings in the processes of intersubjective communication and typification. The phenomenological approach unveils the practical reality of cultural ideals: their creation by socially interacting people, their instrumental role for ongoing communication, their reconstitution by new agents who act under the changed circumstances of action, and so on. It makes sweeping claims regarding the nature of all social, and not just political, reality:

> In its analysis of typification it asserts also the constructed nature of social roles, hence of the entire social structure, and hence of the interests that flow from it. Interests, from the phenomenological perspective, are no more primordial and no less constructed than culture. (Welch, 1993: 113)

If this is so, political culture becomes not just a "context", or "environment", of political action, but its very essence. The answer to the eternal question of "who gets what, when and how" appears to depend on our reading of cultural codes constituting all four members of the formula, starting with an agent itself. "Who", in its both personal and political qualities,

presents itself as an assemblage of social/cultural roles dictating individual self-understanding no less than objective premises of action. "What" ceases to be a sum of things and similarly understood ("reified") objects, such as money, power, status, and so on, unravelling instead as interactively reached cultural conventions whose meaning makes any sense only in this particular society (which may be also global) and at this particular historical juncture (which may also span the whole of written history). "When" obviously involves not metrical, but culturally defined, sociohistorical time, that hinges upon relative positions of various agents in the ongoing stream of social communication, and on their respective behavioral and interactional dynamics. Thus, for the purposes of phenomenological study, it is not important to concretize "when" as, say, "year 2000" - or even add the relational descriptors, like "after the elections". More important is to situate "when" contextually and associationally, to establish priorities, to pinpoint leaders and laggards, e. g., "after group X had been marginalized" or "before social tensions explode the unstable compromise". Finally, "how" cannot just mean redistributive mechanisms, legal procedures and informal schemes; it actually signifies the cultural basis of legitimacy, established ways of thinking/doing, essential building blocks of the actors' "lifeworlds": norms, conventions, traditions, premeditated and uncontemplated forms of meaning.

D. Postmodernism: Revolt or Continuity?

Already this brief previous discussion of contemporary ways to theorize political culture leads to the conclusion that much-spoken-about postmodernism, in fact, continues both structuralist and phenomenological traditions of culture studies, relying on the first mostly negatively, by choosing it as a favourite target of criticism, just as it relies on the second one positively.[7] However, even in the first instance, postmodernism remains too close to its structuralist predecessors in both linguistic (F. Saussure) and cultural-anthropological (C. Lévi-Strauss) schools to pretend that the "poststructuralist" label continuously attached to it connotes only negation and demolition, without actually suggesting some heritage passed and adopted. Anthony Giddens suggested that propositions unifying both structuralism and poststructuralism (J. Derrida, M. Foucault et al) can be found in

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[7]Postmodernism and phenomenology are genealogically united by common ancestry: Friedrich Nietzsche is but one, though most visible, forefather to both.

> ... the thesis that linguistics ... [is] of key importance to philosophy and social theory...; an emphasis upon the relational nature of totalities, connected with the thesis of the arbitrary character of the sign, together with a stress upon the primacy of signifiers over what is signified; the de-centring on the subject; a peculiar concern with the nature of writing, and therefore with textual materials; and an interest in the character of temporality, as somehow constitutively involved with the nature of objects and events. (1987: 74)

We need only add that all these trends appeared to affect Giddens himself, as witnesses the trajectory of his intellectual movement from historical materialism and structuralism to the original "structuration" theory to more recent publications on postmodernity and postmodernism (see Giddens, 1991, etc.).

As for phenomenological influences on postmodernist theorization, commonalities are most obvious in the notion of a constructed character of social universe, in the articulate distinction between physical time and sociohistoric "temporality", in unavoidable similarities between phenomenological "lifeworlds" and the postmodernist multi-layered "texts", and so on. Postmodernist "de-centring" of the subject cannot but remind us of phenomenological attempts to "bracket" individual self-consciousness, while the emphasis on creative "reading" of sociocultural "texts", once again, evokes the whole problem of intentionality, as formulated by E. Husserl (1931, etc.) and his followers, down to contemporary ethnomethodologists and symbolic interactionists. Normalization, typification and mundane communication are common objects of study in both empirical ethnomethodology and the postmodernist "archeology of knowledge", and the Foucauldian genealogical method of inquiry relies, after all, on the researcher's ability to "go on" with lifeways and meanings pertinent to the observed culture "island" or culture "stream". We might say that the difference is in phenomenology stressing the "intentional creation of objectivity" (Alexander, 1987: 34), while, for postmodernism, this process is best described as spontaneous. However, even transcendental phenomenology never warranted the premeditated, self-conscious character of intentionality. By the same token, when postmodernists deal with the reality of "discourses", they may insist on eschewing an idea of any single "author", but will inevitably have to address a multiplicity of "interpreters," or "narrators." Therefore, even here there are some important areas of commonality between phenomenology and postmodernism, both of which assert some participation of consciousness in creation of social reality,

simultaneously avoiding dead ends of classic idealism, where the subject's consciousness is elevated to truly demiurgical status.

To sum it up, the epistemological and methodological gap between postmodernism and more conventional social theories is significantly narrower than usually acknowledged. The relevance of this "discovery" for political culture studies can be easily appreciated, once we remember the unambiguous marginalization of the very term "political culture" in postmodernist writings. Not many of the postmodernist thinkers want to engage themselves in a methodologically stern, empirically grounded politico-culturalist research. The category is usually associated (and rightly so) with behaviourist theorization, which immediately delegitimizes its use in anti-positivist poststructuralist projects. I would argue, however, that the very essence of postmodernist "revolution" implies tacit incorporation of the politico-culturalist problematic, though couched in different terms and put on an unusual conceptualization plane. For postmodernists, knowledge is power, quite literally, and participating in a discourse means nothing less than entering a power battlefield, no matter how innocent that discourse might seem. Power tensions make the social "text" what it is, through both stressing these or those elements of the "text" and suppressing the others, and spacing the text throughout, that is, making it "readable" for the participants. Who controls the cultural fabric of a society controls its political establishment, and vice versa. Power is not circumscribed by political practices, being, rather, unequally "spread" all over society, condensed here and there, dissolved or suspended elsewhere. This picture potentially suggests that postmodernism is, in essence, a contemporary theory of interpenetration of culture and politics, their mutual positing and converging; a theory that elevates culture and politics to a position of unquestionable prominence in the life of society, pushing traditional boundaries of both to their logical limits which coincide with the limits of the society itself. In short, it is the most fashionable theory of political culture today, bold enough to ignore both its conventional intellectual origins and the limited character of the questions it poses before academia, while inflating their formulations to truly universal proportions.

Methodologically Pluralist Theorizations

Several contemporary theories of political culture have been left out of the present

account. This has not been intended to denigrate their significance for political culture theorization, nor to deny importance to the questions they raise with respect to political and social sciences in general. My intention was simply to emphasise and to counterpose conclusively definable types of political culture conceptualization, logically distinct from one another, and to illustrate them with selected reference to the works that first brought this or that type into existence. In this account, I was not trying to classify old and new real-world problems analyzed with the help of political-culturalist tools of inquiry. Rather, I attempted to concentrate on the shape of these tools themselves, discussing their epistemological origins and methodological rules of usage. If one goes this way, the works that might be considered seminal from the standpoint of problematization often reveal themselves as more or less elaborate continuation or reshaping of the original, earlier advanced theorizations. Thus, R. Inglehart's work, whatever the importance of the shift toward postmaterialist values might be in itself, methodologically is best described as an orthodox behaviourist research. In epistemological terms, Inglehart's innovation consists of grafting Eastonian systems theory onto the solid behaviourist foundation. In Inglehart's own words, the central focus of his approach "is on things that exist within individuals, and these things can be best measured with survey data" (1977: 4). Accordingly, we do not dwell on this otherwise landmark study too much: overall, it is developed within the limits of Almond and Verba's paradigm.

Another example of a mixed type of political-culturalist theorizing involves critical theory. Its own classical references usually pay tribute to old and "young" Frankfurt thinkers: from Max Horkheimer and Theodore W. Adorno to Jürgen Habermas and Claus Offe. Yet, the original source of inspiration for all generations of "Frankfurters" remains Marx. Other influences may include Immanuel Kant, Max Weber, Edmund Husserl, Georg Lukács, and even Talcott Parsons, but Marx will inevitably loom. No wonder classic Marxist structuralism again and again appears underneath all newly constructed conceptualizations of political culture offered by critical theorists. All the essential features of the critical project in political culture studies are indebted to Marx and Marxism: (a) insistence on multiplicity of political cultures in any given society and their correlation with class divide; (b) distinction between "high" and "low" culture, the culture of those who dominate and those who are dominated; (c) dynamic understanding of political culture as production and

(re)distribution of skills, values, behavioral patterns and societally acceptable levels of political competence; (d) logically following categorization of social groups into "producers", "carriers", "recipients", and sometimes "targets" of political culture; (e) establishing links between the "political reference culture", "officialized" political culture, electoral culture, and the "political high culture", thus underscoring the sway that dominant political concepts hold over the minds of a "mainstream" academia, and the manner in which dominant political ideas are incorporated into a self-serving political structure (Honneth, McCarthy, Offe, and Wellmer, 1992). Phenomenology participates in critical theorizing through the key concept of "lifeworld" and the attached battery of notions, like "the horizon of meaning", "communicative action", "intersubjectivity", "constructed reality", "spatiotemporal context", "social-historical field" and so on. Postmodernism is also acknowledged, though criticized both for its epistemological reductionism (linguistic, aesthetic, cultural) and ideological resignation disguised as "revolt" (as J. Habermas has put it, "young conservatism"). Overall, for critical theorists,

> [P]olitical culture is more than linguistically textualized reality. It is communicatively produced reality in which textualization constitutes but one of many mechanisms of construction ... [W]hat suggests itself is an understanding of political culture as a socially structured production of opinions and voting decisions. Political culture is then "objectivized" sociologically, not in virtue of its contents but in virtue of its social structuration, and is hence made an object of scientific analysis. (Eder, 1992: 108-109)

To situate different "schools and sects" theorizing political culture on some common plane of discourse, which all of them will have to - whatever uneasily - share, we need to go back to the collectivist vs. individualist divide that somewhat ordered our reflections on the pre-history of the problem. Methodologically speaking, critical theory falls into a long and honoured tradition of collectivist, ethical-axiological problematization of relationships between politics and society, power and culture, individual and community. Postmodernism, to the contrary, follows on essentially individualist path, extending it to the extremes unimaginable in behaviourist theorizing. Any structuralist and systemic approach to political culture will inevitably gravitate toward the whole at the expense of the part, and toward the subsystem at the expense of individual elements. Both behaviourism and rational choice

theories stubbornly defend the individual, specifically individual rationality, which is supposed to deal with a sociocultural environment and, in effect, reproduce it (Wildavsky, 1987). Phenomenological accounts uneasily sit between the two, trying to be neither too objective nor too subjective ("intersubjectivity"), and neither too materialistic nor too idealistic ("constructed reality", "social historicity"). The same holds true with respect to A. Giddens's "structuration" theory and his manoeuvres not only between materialism and idealism, or individual and structure, but also between modernism and postmodernism, especially in more recent works (1987; 1991). If anything, the present state of political culture theory is best characterized as in flux, with no mainstream paradigm emerging. Contenders are many: from traditional Almondian accounts, still very much in use, to interpretivist phenomenology (Street, 1993; Welch, 1993) to a "grid-group" theory by Michael Thompson, Richard Ellis and Aaron Wildavsky (1990; see also Coyle and Ellis, 1994) to neo-structuralism in all its varieties and poststructuralism in all its sound and fury. It seems that no common ground is traceable for all of them, and many people would not bother to seek it at all. A final word on some tendencies emerging, on closer scrutiny, out of this collage should be, however, in order.

The most obvious observation is that epistemological and methodological pluralism in political culture studies is here to stay. To substantiate the claim, we need only to notice the growing number of works following all of the discussed approaches. Secondly, if the change in intellectual fashion can speak something about new trends in research, one cannot ignore the rising tide of "qualitative" models of political culture and a corresponding relative loss of excitement with opportunities for quantification. Political culture studies, over the last few decades, have become much "softer" than initially intended by their modern promoters. Third, there is a clear move away from methodological individualism, or at least away from its unmodified and unqualified, uncompromised brand. Even rational choice sympathisers, once they move into political culture research, recognize severe limits, if not the inadequacy, of their starting methodological framework and, sooner or later, propose some "culture-sensitive" adjustments (Wildavsky; Ruth Lane; Coyle and Ellis). Finally, new understandings of the role meaning plays in social reality constitution and change gave a boost to interpretivist theories of political culture; to those who, sometimes consciously, occupy

middle-of-the-road positions in grand epistemological battles. Political culture theorists now want to be empirically grounded without looking positivist, and attentive to social structure, without being accused of materialistic determinism. Tackling the ever acute problem of human agency, they attempt to guard themselves from backsliding into idealism of goals primacy. While discussing the cultural "embeddedness" of action, they strive to saturate "objective structures" with interactively produced meanings. This eclecticism, however, has its own priorities and internal hierarchies. Perhaps those reflect the fragmented and unevenly valued structure of our own "lifeworld", our present "postmodernist" predicament with its inherent quest for meaning that has only begun, in earnest, recently. Methodological eclecticism significantly reflects the fractured nature of the social worlds investigated in political culture studies, and, if not explicit in a particular single research, inevitably appears when we compare contributions drawn by any specific object of study over some time period, in the course of its logically developing problematization by the international academic community.

Chapter 2. POLITICAL CULTURE RESEARCH AS INTERPRETATION

Our own approach to the study of political culture follows interpretivist accounts in that it tries to achieve understanding, and not just provisional explanation, which satisfies most positivist-oriented researchers. Interpretivism is often accused of being too "soft" a methodology, as compared to "harder" quantitative methods. Its "soft" character presumably implies lower standing in the hierarchy of social science methods. The claim to the higher standing, as presented by quantitative methods, is usually justified by heavier application of statistical and other mathematical tools, which are believed to somehow render the research findings more credible. In fact, the "hardest" methods of the mathematized social science still leave the floor open for interpretation: the interpretation of the chosen variables, procedures for their operationalization, and, finally, the results achieved in the study. Interpretation is, therefore, smuggled in, even if criticized in explicit polemics.

This alone may allow one to question the uncritically assumed superiority of statistical methods. However, there is a more important test to offer. This test, according to the adepts of social science positivism themselves, is the test of theory's ability to predict facts, not just explain the developments post hoc. If we apply this test to, say, such an event of truly historic proportions as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the world socialist system in general, we will see that practically no one in the "hard" mainstream of social and political sciences was able to anticipate it or conceptualize its logic beforehand. Sure enough, some speculations were advanced by people like Z. Brzezinski (1989) or Andrei Amal'rik (1970), but speculations, by definition, refer to the realm of rather "soft" theory. The "hard" researchers, following their own canon of "serious" inquiry, were still engaged in "counting heads" in the Central Committee or, at the very best, measuring the respondents' support of "strikes, spontaneous demonstrations, political meetings and other forms of social protest" against "more peaceful, traditional and organized methods of solving social conflicts" (Finifter and Mickiewicz, 1992: 872).[1] The actual break-up of a superpower was not even noted, let alone calculated or measured, while already in progress, and took everyone by surprise with the fait accompli. This is not to say that statistical methods are irrelevant. This is only to suggest that their alleged superiority is not an axiom that should be taken for

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[1]Incidentally, "traditional" means of problem resolution were supported by almost two thirds of this study's sample. The Soviet Union had apparently disappeared without its people being aware of that.

granted.

Computing Political Culture: Problems of Survey Research

A statistical inquiry is highly desirable and quite instrumental where the task is to sketch the social portrait of a group in easily identifiable sociodemographic parameters: age, gender, occupation, ethnicity, education level, and so on. It is also useful in obtaining clear-cut answers to unambiguous questions, especially when the sample consists of the people who are able to give those answers. No one would deny validity to a public opinion survey as an established methodological tool, many times tested in the U.S. and elsewhere in the West. However, statistical instruments' applicability to the realm of social and cultural meaning is rather limited. Hence, their pertinence to the analysis of political culture phenomena cannot avoid being doubted.

Part of the problem is covered by considerations of the "respondent bias" - a recurring error, which is well known to survey researchers. If a "respondent bias" becomes statistically significant, and the potential technical causes are eliminated, it can mean only that we are dealing with collective, rather than individual distortions. Since we cannot attribute them to peculiarities of particular life histories, the distortions should be explained in social, that is cultural, terms. However, by engaging culture, or society, or historical period in explanation of survey irregularities, we immediately step outside of the circle of individual variables that were initially identified. Good behaviourist research becomes diluted with presumably superfluous interpretations which, nevertheless, appear necessary to "explain out" the data that refuse to corroborate the theory.

The problem with statistical techniques in culture analysis is surely not limited to the respondents' bias, as it is understood by survey researchers. We may (and should) look deeper than response errors and pose the question of the researcher's own bias, be it on the level of stereotypes, learned prejudices, or preconceived images of how the survey design should play out in the end. We should not stop there. The next legitimate question would touch upon the nature of the procedure itself, its hidden or scarcely acknowledged premises, and its own "philosophy", which is usually taken for granted by a quantitative researcher. Why these and not those variables were chosen? Why were they operationalized as they

were? How can we be sure that the qualities measured are quantifiable at all? Why has a cardinal, and not nominal, scale been employed? How is the gap between the value and an individual opinion of that value to be bridged? What about the linkage of a solicited opinion with actual behaviour?

Many of these questions are debated by sociological practitioners themselves. However, it would be too generous to assume that all of them are self-consciously postulated and answered in each and every survey. The "gap" problem remains. Clear incommensurability between individual opinion and the social value it is supposed to represent still renders political culture surveys somewhat suspicious. More sophisticated statistical tools cannot solve the dilemma. One of the more popular, factor analysis, helps to group individual opinions in one or more clusters, thus demonstrating, for example, that ecological awareness in the sample groups together with a concern for greener cities. The procedure, extensively used in R. Inglehart's studies on materialist/postmaterialist values, as well as in many other studies of contemporary culture changes, is useful, if one needs to create some hierarchy of preferences, and establish more or less tight connection ("loading") of any singular preference within a homogenized preference group. However, nobody can guarantee that the same preferences will be "loaded" in the same way tomorrow, or even that the same factor will show up the next survey time. And even if these guarantees were possible, they still would not address one of the main issues: a fundamental discrepancy between the level of preferences and the level of values.

Another issue of genuine methodological ("metatheoretical") interest is that of correlation between the static image of a population achieved in a survey, and its true dynamic properties, including the ability to change its preferences over time and, even more importantly, to make them either congruent or dissonant to underlying values. As many practitioners know better than anybody else does, the survey gives just a snapshot of the moment. No matter how elaborate the questions addressing the past or the future of the respondent, nothing can alter the fact that the answers are given from a present standpoint. If a survey aims at "measuring" culture, it is a culture's frozen image that is really measured. The homology between this substitute and the actual living culture is about the same as the homology between a photograph and the human being, whose image was captured by a

camera.

Yet another concern pertains to the consciousness-behaviour dilemma. Misnamed behaviourists systematize conscious and premeditated responses, which reflect upon the present state of "answering mind" of a respondent, not on her actual behaviour. They measure, therefore, ideally represented phenomena, or something that may be labelled "declared", "self-revealed" consciousness, which is even not the same as actual consciousness of the respondents. The unspoken premise of this research strategy implies the existence of unambiguous correlation between behaviour and consciousness. However, as social anthropologists demonstrated long ago, "no correlation can be found on the level of behaviour, because behaviour, on the one hand, and categories of thought, on the other ... belong to two entirely different levels. It would not be possible to try to correlate one with the other" (Lévi-Strauss, 1963, vol. 1: 72). Many political culture analysts also acknowledge this dichotomy. If one agrees that the concept of political culture denotes something larger and more profound than public opinion on political or politically relevant issues, if political culture's true realm is defined as recurrent patterns of political behaviour, than we cannot but look for some other instruments of analysis, in addition to traditionally employed survey research.

Public opinion surveys tap into that level of consciousness that respondents themselves allow to be seen by a researcher. It is the level of demonstrated, and, therefore, normative consciousness, which may or may not coincide with the actual state of mind of a person. Respondents' answers are usually influenced by a dominant ideology, the prevalent public discourse or mode of argumentation; by what is considered appropriate or fashionable at the moment. People not only learn their attitudes and opinions, they learn the socially acceptable way to express them. The opinion they offer to a researcher always reflects what they think are the societal expectations of proper versus deviant views of the society's members. Of course, this link may work both ways: by either "normalizing" answers or introducing the declared deviance where, in fact, there is nothing but conformism. Though the instruments of "normalization" may vastly differ from one society to another, the result will nevertheless be the same, whether fear or honour, or other internalized "mores" accomplished the task. "Normalization" is inevitable, because it is propelled by the perennial

presence of significant others, who impose a normative order from outside on what was taken to be an undisturbed individual revelation.

It could be quite an interesting idea to study this real normative order through the analysis of systemic distortions, spotted in individual answers to survey questions. Research of this type does not figure prominently in political science today, and even attempts to account for systemic ideological or psychological distortions are few. When the collective bias is considered with the required seriousness, the remedy proposed is commonly weak: thus, in one important survey of Soviet immigrants, the respondents were asked to remember their "last normal period" of life in the Soviet Union, and to attempt answering the questionnaire from this perspective (Millar, 1993: 184). In other words, they were asked to correct for their well-ingrained hostility to the system with a conscious intellectual effort, or to put themselves temporarily in a position of a "value-free" observer. Needless to say that, as a mental experiment of a kind, it was a valid and, perhaps, the only possible strategy under the circumstances. Nevertheless, the correctional value of this strategy remains circumscribed by the established deficiencies of any mental experiment.

An objective difficulty of realizing the project of studying the societal normative order through the systemic distortions revealed in a survey research concerns the fact of society's heterogenous nature. Individual deviations may not be caused by the same source, even if they are all grouped in a coherent cluster. The "significant other", responsible for self-censoring of the answers, can be society as a whole, the government, ideal or real referent group, family and friends, or even projected images of fictitious individuals. It would not be easy to disentangle distortions caused by some universal normative consensus from those originating in a personal life history or peculiarities of a group interaction. Additionally, where the society's normative order is, in fact, responsible for this or that answering strategy, its influence on the person will be necessarily mediated and swayed by social, cultural, political, and ethnic "noises", which intermingle in practically innumerable ways, making the most advanced multivariate regression analysis either non-applicable or too cumbersome to be efficiently employed.

The behaviourist mainstream in political culture research is being criticized from a variety of standpoints: anthropological, structuralist, phenomenological (see Merelman,

1991; Welch, 1993). The arrival of the "grid and group" school of Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky's followers (Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky, 1990; Coyle and Ellis, 1994) gives a particularly conspicuous sign of the unravelling of a positivist consensus inside the mainstream's hard empiricist core. We should not go as far as postmodernist or critical-theoretical elaborations to understand that clear dissatisfaction with the present state of politico-culturalist research grows steadily. One of the best recent works in the mainstream (Putnam, 1993) is quite representative in this respect, since it has to incorporate such clearly interpretivist tools as the concept of social capital, or the phenomenologically refined notion of the "norms of reciprocity", not to mention broadly interpretivist historical-sociological methods, to arrive at its highly informative conclusions.

The main fallacy of the statistical methods' application to culture studies in general and political culture in particular concerns the logic of distributional causality embedded in these methods. What statistics may show us, essentially, is the n probability of the feature x to occur in the population, just as it occurs in an appropriately drawn sample. Bivariate strategies demonstrate that the distributional pattern of x is significantly correlated with the distributional pattern of y, prompt the conclusion that x and y are correlated as such. However, it is hardly possible to proceed from here to the idea that x and y will always exhibit this correlation. A much easier task of ascertaining the non-spurious character of the relationship between two variables quite often appears barely manageable due to the large number of intervening and external variables, exerting direct influence on the variables under study. And even when this difficulty is overcome, when it is shown with the required precision that this number of occurrences of the phenomenon a corresponds to that number of occurrences of the phenomenon b, and no significant c enters the equation, it still has to be proven that a actually causes b (or vice versa). If we switch from mechanical causality to much broader notions of origin, or genesis, b may cease to depend on a altogether, and instead appear to depend on b_0, that is, on its own initial condition, or an earlier stage of development.

Of course, earlier stages of some quality can be formalized as well. However, this will not change the same underlying probabilistic logic, which still extrapolates from a distribution registered at the moment to a matching distribution tomorrow, and assumes the

essential character of this distribution as a matter of fact. In this picture, all real and potential dynamics are swallowed by a static representation - static, even if it attempts to incorporate a temporal dimension.

In addition to being static, this representation of mechanical causality is always unilinear and straightforward. It is not suited well to comprehend the co-existence of a and -a within the same entity. Meanwhile, contradictions lie at the essence of culture, and the precarious balance of opposites shapes not only its present state, but also the direction of further development. Straightforward thinking in the matters that would be best covered by the concept of dialectical causality leads to reification of cause and effect that in reality are often reversible. Disaggregation of composite phenomena into a number of elements for the sake of assumed mathematical stringency of correlations is another example of mechanical unidimensionality, which has the same effect on studying complex cultural systems as an attempt to "disaggregate" the house in a number of bricks would have on studying architectural designs of human dwellings.[2] Generally speaking, there is some ground for suspicion that statistical reasoning and the behaviour of cultural systems are, in a word, incongruent and, therefore, the value of statistical methods' application to sociocultural reality is limited. This is not to say that statistical methods should be eschewed in culture studies entirely: such a view would be obscurantist and would not do justice to important results already achieved through these methods' use. What I am arguing, rather, pertains to the necessity of our firm and ever-present awareness of a limited capacity of social statistics, in culture studies especially. This awareness should help to use social statistics appropriately in diagnostic, descriptive, and heuristic endeavours, and never claim for it more than is its due.

Many prominent representatives of the interpretivist tradition in social sciences subscribed to this cautious approach in their critique of the prevailing naturalist or positivistically empiricist mainstream. It should be unequivocally stated here that the widespread view of interpretivism as somehow constituting a mode of thinking antithetical

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[2]For a recent example of controversy surrounding questions of procedure in aggregating-disaggregating variables, particularly when a study of cultural phenomena is involved, see Jackman and Miller (1996), as well as the reply by Granato, Inglehart and Leblang (1996).

to empirical social science is plainly wrong. None other than Max Weber was one of the first to suggest the project of an "understanding" sociology, and his proper seat in the tradition of empirical social studies is not doubted. An undisputed authority in phenomenological sociology, Alfred Schutz, argued long ago that "a set of rules for scientific procedure is equally valid for all empirical sciences whether they deal with objects of nature or with human affairs. Here and there, the principles of controlled inference and verification by fellow scientists, and the theoretical ideals of unity, simplicity, universality, and precision prevail" (1977: 226). Schutz perceived phenomenological sociology as an empirical science, and phenomenological method in political culture studies is still being praised for its "strongly empirical nature" and even its capacity "to counter the idealist tendency" (Welch, 1993: 114). While the last point might be exaggerated (more on this later), the first one seems to be firmly grounded. Concrete empirical observations and even experiments constitute much of the latter-day substance of phenomenological tradition in sociology, especially when taken together with its ethnomethodological offshoot.

Understanding Political Culture: Some Lessons from Phenomenology

Today, an interpretivist standpoint in political culture studies usually gravitates to one of the two schools of the twentieth-century social thought that originated in continental European philosophy: structuralism or phenomenology. The first one cites Karl Marx, Ferdinand de Saussure, Max Weber and Claude Lévi-Strauss as its authorities; it has been also greatly influenced by the Wittgensteinian reformulation of the analysis of language in his Philosophical Investigations and Peter Winch's ideas on what social science should be all about. The second school sometimes goes as deep in tracing its intellectual origins as S. Kierkegaard; however, its proven apostles are Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, Edmund Husserl, and Alfred Schutz. Despite their not uncommon quarrels, these two schools stand closer to each other than is readily acknowledged. Their differences stem from methodologically preferred standpoints and, simultaneously, the key concepts reflected in their names: structure in the first case and the phenomenal world in the second. Structure refers to more or less stable relational regularities of social reality, while phenomena may be regarded as its evanescent constituent elements or their traces. Structure is presumed to

exist independently of either an observer or participants to a social action, i.e. objectively. Phenomena, on the contrary, are always given to somebody or (re)constructed by someone; they have no independent existence and should be considered as purely subjective or intersubjective creations. Hence, the distinction between the phenomenal world and the world of objects, and constant attention to subjectively constituted boundaries between the two.

Structuralist interpretivism is not wholly alien to phenomenological insights. Deep interpenetration of the two can be detected in the works by S. Freud (1922; 1946), whose distant political-culturalist echo sounds in Richard Solomon's monograph (1971) on the Chinese political culture. Among the linguistic analysts, Peter Winch himself defines understanding, quite phenomenologically, as something circumstantial, as

> ... grasping the point or meaning of what is being done or said. This is a notion far removed from the world of statistics and causal laws: it is closer to the realm of discourse and to the internal relations that link the parts of a realm of discourse. The notion of meaning should be carefully distinguished from that of function, which is popular with certain sociologists. (1977: 156)

For another example, a possible bridge to Husserlian transcendental logic may be drawn from F. de Saussure's views on arbitrary character of the sign. Even the much-criticized panlogism of Lévi-Straussian structural anthropology is softened by his supreme attention to minute details in life of closely studied primitive societies.

On the other side, phenomenology has never eschewed the notion of structure completely. It would be hardly possible in the first instance, since phenomenological explanation of social reality also generalizes and draws regularities. Broadly speaking, the transcendental logic of phenomenology is based on a structuralist approach to consciousness, though structural categorizing here is from the very beginning animated by an activist, Ego-centred standpoint. After all, what else might phenomenological reduction, or "bracketing," be, if not an operation of structural ordering of the experience of consciousness?

Phenomenological sociology is not fully subjectivist either. In Schutz's words,

> I can, on the one hand, attend to and interpret in themselves the phenomena of the external world which present themselves to me as indications of the consciousness of other people. When I do this, I say of them that they have objective meaning. But I can, on the other hand, look over and through these external indications into the constituting process within the living

> consciousness of another rational being. What I am then concerned with is subjective meaning. (1967: 37)

In this explanation, boundaries between the subjective and the objective become blurred, as do those between phenomena and structure. "Between the understanding of subjective meaning and the understanding of pure objective meaning there is a whole series of intermediate steps based on the fact that the social world has its own unique structure derived, as it is, from the worlds of direct social experience, of contemporaries, of predecessors, and of successors" (Schutz, 1967: 135-36). The phenomenological world needs structural organization, and the very oppositions of internal and external, direct and mediated, constituting and constituted are indicative of that.

In phenomenological sociology, phenomena are understood as something subjectively significant to a social actor, which distinguishes this specialized use of the concept from its use in natural sciences. Phenomena are those parts of the environment which are endowed with meaning and, therefore, should not be meant to include all things and occurrences of the external world. Phenomena are "pre-selected" and "pre-interpreted" by the participants to an event, by those who inhabit a concrete part of the social universe as "the human beings living, acting, and thinking within it" (Schutz, 1977: 233). These people use their "common-sense constructs" to shape the reality of their lives into a coherent whole. Therefore, we cannot judge their activity by either its observable manifestations only or its directedness upon a specific external object, or even both. We need to go further to comprehend the constituted nature of an object which is conjectured to motivate the action; to see it as both objective and subjective, since it will necessarily incorporate its own mental image into its social nature and any motivational structure associated with its external existence. In contradistinction to behaviourist naturalism, which strives to separate structure and culture, institutions and attitudes, but eventually reifies both, being unable to substantiate the links it postulates from "objective" social systems to "subjective" attitudes of the people, phenomenology asserts that subjective images exist right inside the "objective" realm of ordinary people's lives, and "[i]t is these thought objects of theirs which determine their behaviour by motivating it" (Schutz, 1977: 233).

A phenomenological approach to political culture research will consequently be: (a)

opposed to the naturalist reification of either subjective or objective elements of a political system; (b) attentive to a subjective meaning-context of the actor; (c) cautious in substituting an observer's own perspective for that of the actors themselves, demanding congruence ("meaning-adequacy") between these two perspectives; (d) quite humble in its explanatory pretensions to "law-like" generalizations, preferring to speak, instead, of "ideal-typical" constructions, suited to fit the interpreter's task at hand. If some of these requirements are not wholly compatible with the original structuralist project, than most of them are actually incorporated into the post-structuralist or, as it is fashionably called, postmodernist theorization. Postmodernism represents an attempt to wed structuralism to phenomenology, with the result that cannot be attributed to the exclusive influence of either. As one of the most viable hybrids of this sort, postmodernism keeps its hold over the imagination of the academic community, even though methodologically substantial applications of its particular strategies are, as of today, limited in both depth and scope. The academic utility of the postmodernist methodology is constantly questioned, because thinking in terms of "methodology" and "utility" is alien to this school of thought. However, whether acknowledged or not, postmodernism remains a result of what, in Schutz's terminology, may be dubbed a "synthesis of recognition" which merges phenomenology and structuralism. I want to stress that its interpretivist power derives from this synthesis, and its success stories should indicate the necessity of further search along this road.

Postmodernist writings demonstrate the mutual complementarity of structuralist and phenomenological traditions in social interpretation. The merger thus presented is but one among all otherwise possible. We need not follow "deconstructionist" or "genealogical" idiosyncrasies, if the task is to develop a potentially viable methodological synthesis of phenomenology and structuralism and to apply it to the problem at hand. The fact that postmodernist authors seldom, if ever, discuss political culture as political culture, that is, as something identifiable within the society without being tantamount to the society as a whole, should alert us to the potential incapacity of postmodernist thinking to deal with

traditional politico-culturalist problematics.[3] At the same time, the postmodernist lesson of pastiche, of conscious methodological eclecticism, noted in Chapter 1, should not be ignored in dealing with such an intrinsically eclectic object as the political culture of any given society. These ideas will guide our own understanding of principles of political culture research, as designed and implemented from an interpretivist standpoint.

The first and most important point to make about political culture is ontological: it concerns the nature of a studied entity. Does it exist objectively, as a part of the world "out there"? If it does, of what world does it constitute a part? Can we conceptualize it the same way natural sciences approach their object of study? Can we assume that the properties uncovered in our study of political culture will (and must) be discerned by any other conscientious observer willing to follow in our footsteps? Is it possible to establish any uniform pattern of political culture change, or progression from its "lower" to "higher" phases of development? Can we expect to create, sometimes, a universal typology of political culture varieties, which will render itself to comparative use not unlike the use Mendeleyev's periodical table of elements enjoys in chemistry?

Most of these questions interpretivists answer in the negative. Stephen Welch, for one example, devoted a book (1993) to the argument against comparative uses of political culture. Even less successful were, in his view, attempts to approach political culture sociologically, that is, those that involved its disaggregation into several second-generation variables, like "tolerance", "trust", and so on (more on this later). Vain expectations of uniform change in political-cultural values undergirded the profound criticism of modernization theory, specifically its crudest Rostowian variants. No clear progression in political-cultural development has been established even for the advanced Western countries, much lauded in earlier studies. Universal typologies were mostly abandoned as hardly applicable to volatile social reality. Those who saw the objects of social sciences as just another subclass of the natural world objects, and no different in the ways we approached them, have found themselves a minority in most of the schools in Europe and elsewhere

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[3]Some exceptions apply. Thomas Bridges's book on "postmodern civic culture" (1994), or Albert Borgmann's discussion of potential refuges from increasingly "hyperrealist" world of today (1992) are both cases in point.

throughout the world.

Not on the American continent, however. Here, the positivist consensus is far from being weakened. Despite incessant attacks by those who draw consistent conclusions from glaring differences between the world of nature and the world of society, mainstream American sociology prefers to ignore those differences. The use of statistical methods is particularly illuminating. Not only are they summoned to substantiate or falsify the hypotheses advanced, but they also often serve as theory engines and even theory substitutes. The unspoken premise of this use is that, once the respective statistical distribution and/or correlation is properly established, it will be there to stay, to be repeated in subsequent measurements as something actually describing a part of social reality under study. In other words, statistical measurements of, say, political culture attitudes are basically of the same quality as those used in calculations of gas volume or liquid velocity in the appropriate natural sciences. The underlying philosophy sees no difference between the realms of nature and culture, social movement and the movement of molecules, psychology and thermodynamics. The fact that this philosophy is now seldom articulated in the open does not change its claims or directedness.

Interpretivists look at positivist "scientization" of culture and society as a contemporary "infantile disorder" in the relatively still young group of social sciences. It is not unlike the first epistemological self-deception of humankind - mythology. Just as mythology could potentially "explain out" anything and everything by animating it and attributing consciousness to animals, things and most abstract concepts alike, "hard" social sciences today want to dispense with the unknown in a reverse procedure of exiling it to an already explained and presumably safe world of machines and mechanical calculations, the world of thing-like objects in general. Philosophical anthropology knows this process under the name "reification". The notion commonly "refers to the way in which people come to perceive their own creations, incorrectly or falsely, as things for which they have no responsibility, over which they have no power, and which they must passively suffer as victims do their fate" (Aho, 1994: 27). Reification in science adds some new aspects: it means dealing with social and cultural objects as if they were devoid of internal meaning, and elevating the observer's partial and incomplete perspective of these objects to the status

of objectively valid, verifiable proposition. It also means an attitude of adjustment and manipulation, which is akin to people's way of navigating through the world of thing-like objects and, once again, serves to justify a hands-off approach then and there, where an observer would otherwise have to adopt a position of personal responsibility and involvement.

Interpretivist theorization goes beyond the "limits of the objective and objectifying standpoint which grasps practices from outside, as a fait accompli, instead of constructing their generative principle by situating itself within the very moment of their accomplishment ..." (Bourdieu, 1977: 3). Interpretivism sensitizes us to the simple fact of the interpreter's presence, which constitutes a fundamental pre-condition of any, even the most positivist, most objectivist scientific inquiry. Interpretivism is, therefore, a methodologically reflexive, self-conscious approach to the problem, while blind objectivism is not. In political culture studies, this methodological reflexiveness deters us from reifying our own conceptual apparatuses and/or empirical findings of people's attitudes and opinions into something unquestionably pertaining to reality "as it is", to its "objective", "verifiable" and "recurrent" characteristics. The presence of an observer inevitably colours the whole picture with his or her ways of conceptualizing and representing social reality, especially such a value-laden part of it as political norms and values, political culture in general. This presence has to be revealed and "deconstructed" to get a better appreciation of a studied object. At the very minimum, it has to be remembered and constantly monitored for possible sources of bias.

The self-critical stance of the interpretivist researcher should be developed up to the point where subjective meaning-contexts of the involved social actors are given at least as serious consideration as the researcher's own speculations and interpretive schemes. Here phenomenological and structuralist approaches diverge. While the first one prioritizes representations by participants and arrives at its view of objective knowledge only through the medium of intersubjective and typically constructed experience (Schutz, 1967), the second one insists on the objective existence of uniform structures underlying often misinterpreted meanings participants attach to their actions, and on the capacity of a learned observer to discover real-world structures underneath phenomenal manifestations of frequently deceitful character (Lévi-Strauss, 1963). Bourdieu's attempt to compensate for

both positions' one-sidedness, nevertheless, leaves him essentially in the neo-structuralist camp, proclaiming:

> Only by constructing the objective structures ... is one able to pose the question of the mechanisms through which the relationship is established between the structures and the practices or the representations which accompany them, instead of treating these "thought objects" as "reasons" or "motives" and making them the determining cause of the practices. (1977: 21)

It seems that dialectics, often invoked by the French sociologist on other occasions, falls victim to this uncompromising "anti-idealist" tirade.

For our purposes, being attentive to subjective meaning-contexts of the actor retains its methodological and epistemological value, notwithstanding all claims and counter-claims with regard to ontological status of the subjective phenomena. Perhaps "objective structures" in a country's history and the inherited ways of doing business are responsible for its current political culture. Perhaps the practices of representation are based upon these objective circumstances. History is still made by people, as Marx aptly noted. And the very living effort of re-activating the inherited structures requires some "thought objects" to be present in whatever limited, mediating capacity. The precise balance between the two is not for us to discuss. It is enough to point out the heuristic value of phenomenological suggestion, and to use it as a precaution against substituting alien interpretations for the actors' own motives, which is at least as bad as offering either interpretations or motives in place of presumably underlying structures.

The phenomenological postulate of meaning-adequacy demands that the observer's perspective should become congruent with that of the observed, which, of course, in the majority of cases can be made possible only through a thought experiment of sorts or other manipulations of the observer's own consciousness. Thus, when S. Welch asserts that the phenomenological concept of political culture "is characterized by an insistence on detailed investigation of the process of the construction of meaning - something that furthermore distinguishes it from an idealist and purely hermeneutic focus on culture as an orienting device for the investigator" (1993: 117), he forgets to mention that any culture decoding, any attempt to trace how meaning was actually constructed by actors, involves an ideal positing of a researcher within the realm of practice under study. The hermeneutic component will

be inevitably present in such an endeavour. The danger of idealist subjectification will not be completely eliminated by the change of focus that will allow one to look through the participants' eyes. The assumption of a constructed character of meaning may not necessarily embed the uncovered meaning in practices or structures. It is equally possible that this assumption will lead to a voluntaristic interpretation of the subjective meaning-context, though attached, this time, to an actor rather than the observer. A phenomenological approach in itself is no guarantee against idealist speculation. But neither is the mainstream "objectivist" standpoint, which, in addition, rarely permits explicit raising of the issue of meaning-adequacy.

Pierre Bourdieu's opinion on the problem is critical of both objectivist and phenomenological solutions. The former are condemned for the "fetishism of social laws" and for the peculiar viewpoint of "social physics" they espouse, often "in the form of an objectivist economism," which seeks to approach human reality "by analyzing the statistical relationships among distributions of material properties ..." (1990: 41, 135). The latter are rebuked for idealism, noticed in their failure to see "the coincidence of the objective structures and the internalized structures" (1990: 26); for subjectivism, and (therefore) "social marginalism", which amounts to reducing social order to its mental and theatrical representations (1990: 135-36); and, finally, for an inflated intellectualism revealed through the concept of intentionality, "with close analysis of the nuances of another's practice and tacit or explicit inquiry (`What do you mean?') into his intentions" (1977: 80).

On the whole, these criticisms seem quite fair. However, when phenomenology fails to make a distinction between objective and subjective forms of existence, it is not because it is unaware of them. On the contrary. It seeks to bridge the gap between the two, but it starts from the subjective side. Thus, the mysteries of "Stalinist" political culture are explained by the fact that it "was a real culture, not just an ideal, for its own agents, who were most exposed to it by the recurrent and profound irregularity of their position" (Welch, 1993: 115). To clarify potential ambiguity, it should be added that "position irregularity" itself had been constituted by means of meaning-aberration, that is, by intentional distortions of reciprocal subjective perspectives of interacting agents. It is this intersubjective aspect of social reality, highly relevant to practical relations, that is of most interest to

phenomenological theory.

Phenomenology is rightly criticized for its idealist tendencies, if what is meant by that is a purely epistemological reading of the term. Unfortunately, in positivist discourse it became burdened with the unspoken connotations of pre-scientific, speculative and imaginary visions of reality, that have little to do with social sciences' standard of precision. When we return the word its original meaning, idealism reappears as one of two possible positions on the question of possible relationships between human consciousness and the world. Idealism asserts an active, primary role of consciousness in the world's constitution and change. While the sweeping application of this claim should be properly left to philosophers, political scientists cannot ignore its more limited value, especially when dealing with ideally-driven chains of social causation - those propelled by a mental project of an action which initiates the activity and drives it to its end through various transformations of the original idea.

In its scrupulous attempts to register respondents' self-characterizations through the instrument of survey research or otherwise, behaviourism is no less idealistic than phenomenology. Phenomenology, however, is much more sensitized to the fact that the reported meaning need not be the intended one, and the intended meaning, moreover, is but one specific instance of the subjective meaning - the one which remains "essentially inaccessible to every other individual" (Schutz, 1967: 99). This certainly does not lead to agnosticism. We cannot live other people's lives (which is the only way to "grab" their intended meaning from the inside), but we are perfectly capable of understanding their actions through the indications they give us. Phenomenology's difference with positivist sociology lies in the attention it gives to all classes of indications, while positivism, surprisingly, restricts inquiry to only officially composed, or formally registered, deliberately produced reports. In positivist sociology, political culture research becomes a survey of the reported attitudes. In phenomenological characterization, political culture is interpreted through the analysis of social interaction itself, and also through the analysis of its objectified products, of which filled questionnaires are neither only, nor the most representative or revealing samples.

When interpretivists demand meaning-congruence between the observer and the

observed, they do not imply that the researcher should become a participant in the course of action he studies. In fact, they do not necessarily try to elevate an informant's perspective over that of a researcher. After all, it has been demonstrated more than once that no minute registration of indigenous narratives can guarantee the right answer to the research questions, or compensate for the absence of thorough theoretical modelling (see Lévi-Strauss, 1963, vol. 1, ch. 8; Bourdieu, 1977, ch. 1). However, some basic familiarity with meaning-contexts of a studied group is essential. Sociodemographic sampling alone cannot represent the universe of meaning in the same proportionate and orderly way it represents the society's gender, age, education and occupational structures. Meaning-formation does not depend on these structural characteristics only, or even primarily. It depends on the social and historical context of an action, the universe of dominant and subdominant discourses, the established ways of value-attribution, and on what Bourdieu calls "the system of structures, structuring dispositions, the habitus, which is constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions" (1990: 52). To account for these basic phenomena, the researcher must leave her own conventional meaning-universe and try to understand the one being studied on its own terms, as well as on the terms which are more or less protected from ethnocentric biases due to their abstract character or universal applicability. Some cultural immersion is inevitable, though it should not be regarded as either a sufficient condition or a final destination of an interpretivist research. In A. Giddens's words:

> Social life cannot even be accurately described by a sociological observer, let alone causally elucidated, if that observer does not master the array of concepts employed (discursively or non-discursively) by those involved. (1987: 18-19)

Since no mastery of native concepts can approach the original levels without the researcher ceasing to be a researcher and becoming a native himself, the knowledge of the meaning-context of any social and political action can be but schematic and imprecise. The other possibility, of course, is to constitute the meaning-context sought in a concrete biographical form, or the form of self-revelation (autobiography). However, this endeavour, by definition, goes beyond what we today associate with social science and its tasks. The resulting dilemma is responsible for the attitude of certain restraint and even humility in explanatory ambitions of the interpretivist theorists.

This humility manifests itself in manifold ways. The one, already noted, might be seen in the refusal to draw law-like generalizations where, in fact, we can speak only about interpretive schemes or ideal-typical constructions. The second involves a much criticized relativism, which, even in its "elementary" form (see Bourdieu, 1977: 2) is able to penetrate much deeper into the essence of a particular cognitive situation than most brands, however sophisticated, of objectivist absolutism. The point that practice is fundamentally altered "by the sheer fact of taking up a `viewpoint' on it and so constituting it as an object (of observation and analysis)" (Bourdieu, 1990: 27) not only legitimizes relativist cautiousness and alerts the researcher to ontological sources of potential bias, but actually demands further exploration of a traditional relativist standpoint with respect to the very nature of cognitive relationship and its embedding in social, and not just individual, history.

Finally, the accusations of inflated intellectualism, sometimes addressed to phenomenology, are misplaced because, from the very beginning, in H. Bergson and later in A. Schutz's works, it has never been exclusively or even specifically about "intentional calculation or conscious reference to a norm" (Bourdieu, 1977: 80). Neither intentionality nor reflexivity should be regarded as absolutely essential for phenomenological analysis. Subconscious and pre-conscious phenomena are no less authentic than fully conscious ones. Freud is no less essential for phenomenological research than conventionally invoked Husserl. Freud's importance lies, perhaps, not so much with his specific models and theories, as with his awareness of the unknown and a readiness to deal with unrecognisable features of the human psyche. A phenomenological position on the problem is summarized by Schutz, who, following Bergson, explicitly asserted "that all distinctions, all attempts to `separate out' individual experiences from the one unity of duration, are artificial, i.e. alien to the pure durée, and all attempts to analyze process are merely cases of carrying over spatiotemporal modes of representation to the radically different durée" (1967: 47). The idea expressed in this passage apparently runs contrary to the intellectualist quest for hard-and-fast classifications, questioning unambiguous certainty and even the recognizably discrete character of the observed phenomena.

Much of the classical phenomenological thrust is present in today's interpretivist literature. The interpretivists cannot disregard traditional structuralist accounts as well.

Structuralism re-appears in political-culturalist research through discourse analysis and studies of identity reformulation (Urban, 1994); through the analysis of community narratives and their building elements, represented as recurrent pairs of oppositions (Buker, 1987); through semiological mapping of cultural artefacts (Lotman, 1990; Lotman and Uspenskij, 1984; Berger, 1990; Merelman, 1991), and so on. Structuralism complements the inescapably individualising tendency of phenomenological scholarship with its own inclination to generalize, to schematize, and to look for universalities applicable across the wildly diverse field of phenomenal manifestations.

We have already seen that structuralist sympathies, in fact, had never left the forefathers of contemporary phenomenological theorizing. By the same token, phenomenological attentiveness to detail informed the unquestionably structuralist thinking of many culture theorists of linguistic and semiological persuasion, among them several better known Russian followers of F. de Saussure: M. M. Bakhtin (1993), V. Ia. Propp (1968), N. S. Trubetskoi (1991), and Yu. M. Lotman (1990). Commenting on Vladimir Propp's work, which would "forever keep the merit of having been the first", C. Lévi-Strauss specifically noted that, "contrary to formalism, structuralism refuses to set the concrete against the abstract and to recognize a privileged value in the latter" (1963, vol. 2: 145, 115). Richness of detail, concrete analysis of cultural material, inductive rather than deductive methods of generalization, were always hallmarks of a good structuralism. It is no surprise, then, to see them in contemporary post-structuralist, postmodernist accounts, which, as any "post" conceptualizations would have been, cannot just turn out as simple negations of their antecedents. Postmodernists wanted to take the best, while disregarding and throwing out what they considered less valuable and plainly useless.

Unfortunately, it is structure and the structural discipline of representation that is often believed to be least valuable. Postmodernists prefer pastiche, collage; they do not care much about structure. Even the subject-object opposition, for them, is too structural, too rigid, too schematic; hence, the subject should be "decentred," if not entirely dissolved in some more or less deindividualized environment: social movement, community, public space, culture, lifeworld, or the "intersubjective terrain of language" (Dolan, 1995: 339). That is why the celebrated particularism of the postmodernist thinking is often shallow: it never

actually redeems the individual it proclaims to save. Some structural orientations, some better defined position in the social-cultural co-ordinates of today are necessary, even if we understand their conditional and constructed nature, to reclaim individual dignity which had been misplaced by the Enlightenment ideologies. Postmodernism is all too often lacking this structural integrity. The individual human being, no matter how fragmented its environment, behaviour and even consciousness might be, still constitutes a point of reference in and by itself. It is as a self-defined and socially definable point that it enters a cultural pastiche, and, as such, it will be always structurally related to other individuals ("points"), their concrete constellations ("pastiche bits") and the whole dynamic picture of a society in motion. Because of this, and not only in order to critically engage totalizing structures of modernity, the "properly narrative" (and socially responsible) postmodern discourse appears to be "also schematic when it comes to general features and generic traits" (Borgmann, 1992: 129). Schematism, or the structure-oriented organization of representations, is inevitable, if we are to account for whatever evanescent and precarious human condition in contemporary society. Even if "the authority of representation constrains us, imposing itself on our thought through a whole dense, enigmatic, and heavily stratified history" (Derrida, 1982: 304), there is no other way to disentangle (not decentre) the individual from its overwhelming web but by actually tracing through all "transformational linkages running in all directions" (Lyotard, 1989: 166), that is, attempting an essentially structuralist endeavour.

Structuralism and phenomenology of the ordinary world will haunt any postmodernist discourse, no matter how fiercely an author in question would deny that or how comfortably ignore the problem. Perhaps, the best interpretivist strategy is to variously utilize both great traditions without attempting to achieve a breakthrough theoretical synthesis of a kind that apparently is no longer possible. Postmodernist insights in the logic of identity construction, reconstruction, fragmentation and alienation should not be abandoned, either. However, I suspect that explaining the process in terms of an anonymous interplay between signifiers and signified, as postmodernists habitually do, is not good enough: for purely practical, if not theoretical reasons. Philosophy may be content with that. Political science may not. The subject must be "brought back in" to allow for both responsibility attribution and meaningful event-analysis.

Interpretivist Political Culture

Political culture, as seen from an interpretivist standpoint, appears as a phenomenal constellation. It is manifested through intersubjective phenomena, which may seem meaningless to an external observer. Considering it as a "system," or "subsystem," may be misleading, if the notion denotes strict logical coherence and the self-identical, homogenous quality of all pieces to the picture. At the same time, using "system" as a shorthand is probably inevitable, when we need to relate an ideal politico-cultural type under study to the broader classes of political and cultural phenomena. In this theoretical juxtaposition, political culture cannot be anything else but a subclass, which belongs to both cultural and political "systems" as something derived from their postulated correlation. This is apparently what was meant, when the concept was first introduced. However, as S. Welch aptly notes, "Almond, in 1956, uncorked a genie whose appetite was far too voracious to be held in check by the feeble constraint of his insistence upon the 'certain autonomy' of political culture from the 'general culture'" (1993: 74). The problem is, culture does not have internal fences and barriers, that would neatly separate "political" and "non-political" domains from each other. Post-structuralists hold on to this real property, when considering power and dominance as spread over the entire surface of society and penetrating to its depths. The concepts such as "family politics," "gender politics," "business politics" or "Internet politics" all reflect this ubiquity of power relations in human society, and may be supplemented with infinite number of their likes: from "breastfeeding politics" to "gravedigging politics." Yet, most of these things are seldom tackled in political culture discussions.[4]

If we are not satisfied with the endless stretching of the political culture realm, we have to disentangle the notion of "politics" from the notion of "power." Power relations will certainly be present in any political situation; however, it does not follow that power is always political in character. Power is an aspect of organizational practices, of which politics constitute only a small part. Power is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for a political relationship to take place. In the world of today, political relationship is constituted as such when state power is interpellated actually or potentially, which brings in the Weberian idea

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[4]Psychocultural analyses, like R. Solomon's Mao's Revolution (1971), make a partial exception to the rule.

of legitimate exercise of impersonal and presumably impartial force; the force that is not set up in direct interpersonal encounter, neither derived from specific rules and regulations of any individual segment of a society, but has an overarching character and equally binds all of its subjects. This concept of political power is definitely relevant to non-state actors, be it in domestic or international politics, inasmuch as they operate with state power or are able to effectively substitute it with other impersonal, seemingly unbiased, non-circumstantial, overarching, binding and authoritative arrangements that are generally accepted as legitimate.

Such is the connotation of the word "political" which we select for predicative use in the phrase "political culture." Its "culture" part presents a problem in itself. Broadly speaking, "culture," "society," "humanity," and "civilization" are all coterminous. Post-Marxist "social practices," just as earlier "praxis" or Bourdieu's "habitus" are all epitomes for living culture, or culture in its processual form. Lebenswelt (lifeworld) usually refers to the immediately present culture, to the cultural environment that draws the "horizon" for a subjective meaning-context and circumscribes individual intentionality. Finally, there are cultural objectifications, which, according to Schutz, "are all products ... for they bear upon them the mark of their production by our fellow men and are evidences of what went on in the minds of our fellow men" (1967: 136). Culture objects not only shape our habitus, conceived as "an acquired system of generative schemes" for subsequent practical operationalization (Bourdieu, 1990: 55). They also constitute our habitat, the world we live in, i.e. everything we believe to be stable surroundings, landscapes, and arenas of our own unfolding lives.

Out of this plenty, the question arises: what culture are we talking about in political culture studies? Is it society as a whole, taken in its "political" dimensions? Is it some part of a society - its processual "subsystem," or, conversely, one objectified in things and products? Is it localized, regional, national, or global "culture"? Is it an aspect of immediate environment or an anonymous, remote and darkened backdrop of the society "out there"? Can we use the concept comparatively and switch from one nation to another, or between various levels of social hierarchy, that is, from the national to subnational, group and subgroup levels?

The first thing to note is that all of these options are actually utilized in political culture research. While classical behaviourism and modernization theory were mostly interested in the national level regularities, presenting political culture as a political "physiology" of an entire society and counterposing it to the compound system of the national political "anatomy" (i.e., structure), more recent research increasingly concentrates on regional, local, and sectoral varieties. Organization theory and business management are responsible for the import of organizational, or institutional culture studies, which, from the time of Selznick's TVA and the Grass Roots (1949), made important advances on traditional political science territory (see Blau, 1987; Rainey, 1991; Schein, 1992; Wilson, 1989). Unsurprisingly, the "new institutionalist" trend in the discipline has been pioneered by an early H. Simon co-author and one of the prominent organizational theorists himself, James March (see March and Olsen, 1989). Studies that go in this direction draw discernible parallels between national and corporate/sectoral cultures, and sometimes even equalize them outright, thus attenuating boundaries of the political culture realm from inside the society in question (see Hofstede, 1980; R. March, 1996). The opposite direction is followed by globalists, who see a "fundamental clash between the culture of modernization ... and the various national political cultures" (Pye, 1990: 11). Representatively, Pye promotes the former to the status of the "world culture" and sharply opposes it to "parochial" values of the latter (1990: 11f). With this hypernational extension of political culture studies, their object risks losing recognizable societal identity and appears questioned from outside the conventional space of its academic and ordinary use.

From the interpretivist standpoint, the idea of the "world culture," as presented by Pye and others from the old modernization guard, is not quite convincing. This is not to deny commonalities between different national cultures and even civilizations. Rather, the interpretivist objections would concentrate on specific content of the "world culture" and question its somewhat unsound identification with the culture of Pax Americana. When mentioning "world culture," are we really talking of the culture of Macdonald's eateries, Macintosh computers and other "McWorld" manifestations, as the incisive Barber's (1995) caricature has put it? Interpretivists would agree that this satirical image of the world as the American hinterland writ large has indeed acquired real power over the minds of certain

groups of people across the globe and, therefore, cannot be dismissed as absolutely nonsensical. However, the same partial subjective validity accrues to other caricature images of the "world culture", once they are adopted by a referent group powerful enough to be noticed by others. From this perspective, there is no essential difference between the Third Reich imagery, the Party-guided heroic socialist construction, the pathbreaking ideas of Kim Il Sung, the Rostowian stages of growth, or the triumphant march of the McWorld. They are all samples of partially successful indoctrination, whereby the very success of indoctrination creates a momentum of self-fulfilling prophecy, and the resulting social changes are subsequently cited to validate the ideas that had caused them in the first place. However, the ideas remain as false as they were from the very beginning, and the ensuing historical development eventually demonstrates that with abundant evidence.

World culture, from an interpretivist point of view, is circumscribed by ontological dimensions of human existence. To concretize the idea, we need first to recite those human dimensions that have been always present in our lives and are not going to change in the foreseeable future. Thus, world culture is a culture of living beings who are born to die, and are aware of that. Therefore, it is a culture of fear and hope, and sympathy, and remorse. All of these phenomena occur within the realm of individual consciousness; at the same time, the only known possibility to develop this consciousness is to be raised in a society. Hence, we all share the tension between "me" and "they," "others," which is another fundamental dimension of the culture common to all humans. Responsibility, obligation, loyalty, taboo, revolt, and betrayal belong to this dimension. There are other aspects as well. Some of the more important have been studied by classics of the interpretivist tradition: from Descartes to Husserl, Freud, Schutz, Heidegger, Sartre and Fromm. I am not going to dwell on this theme with any pretension to give it its due. My only excuse for bringing it forward at all was to give at least some idea about the profound gap in discourse and meaning that separates "modernizationist" treatment of the "world culture" topic from its much less confident and much more reverent discussions in the interpretivist literature.

While interpretivists would not doubt the concept of national political culture, they are extremely cautious in its application. No nation is a homogenous entity. The political culture of any given nation is a composite quality, a behavioural median of all its constituent

units. Each unit's role in the outcome's creation and conditioning is "weighted" according to the power it commands and influence it exercises over the other units within the system and beyond its boundaries. Unsurprisingly, the political culture of a nation is very much an elite-led phenomenon. It usually reflects established schemes of elite political behaviour (the factual component), but also the elite's own myths and illusions it disseminates for both internal and external use (the imaginary component). Quite often, therefore, what has been studied as the political culture of a nation appears to be the political culture of a nation's elite, or, even more deceitfully, the elite-inculcated imagery of a preferred reality, which is naively copied in response registration and subsequently presented as nation X's way of "doing things."

Phenomenological interpretivism dismisses overdeterministic accounts of national political culture. Though the latter is always pre-given to a current generation, it cannot be regarded as either immutable or impenetrable to the ongoing practices. That is why "political culture" is preferred to the "national character": culture is conventional, conditional, and open to change, but character is meant to be accomplished; it is here to stay and to endure, which invites reificationist treatment.

When talking about political culture, we are speaking of constructed and reconstructed, contested, enacted, presented and represented phenomena. Do we also mean something inherited? Without a grain of doubt. However, "inherited," in this context, invokes the social and cultural meaning of the term, i.e. something passed over to the successor generation as a part of its lifeworld. As such, it can be open to contradictory claims, continued, reactivated, left dormant or even pushed into oblivion. There is nothing inevitable about the inherited political culture; at least, nothing absolutely unavoidable. This leads to a conclusion that our ability to predict developments in political system from observations of its culture specificities, as revealed here and now, is always limited and will remain this way.

The natural question at this point could be, why bother to study political culture at all? Can we accord it the status of an independent variable? How should we operationalize it for the purposes of comparative research? The answers are often pessimistic. S. Welch (1993) is utterly sceptical of the very possibility of featuring political culture in a variable

format, whether a dependent or independent variable's role is being suggested. If he is right, comparative use of the category is ruled out. Its operationalization in terms of sociological disaggregation also misses the point, because, even if successful, it would create

> a theory in sociology; it would not be a comparative use of political culture, even if the concept of political culture were to figure in it. A conflict between comparative and sociological uses of political culture arises from the fact that the more detailed and complex (therefore in a sense adequate) an account of political culture is, the less comparable it is. Sociological sophistication ... renders untenable the generalizations that are necessary for cross-national comparison. (Welch, 1993: 7)

It should be noted that doubts of this kind have hunted cultural anthropology from L. Morgan (1877) and Sir J. Frazer's (1918) times. Of course, culture specificity makes both interpretation and translation of meaning difficult. Nevertheless, this is precisely what has been done throughout all known human history, which is full of cross-cultural contacts, attempts at understanding, implicit and explicit comparisons. In any such a comparison political culture is used as a variable, even if unreflexively and non-academically. In other words, people tend to believe in eventual understanding of the basic workings of a foreign culture, no matter how strange they may seem at first glance. Understanding is possible because there are cross-cultural commonalities, based upon what I believe should be properly labelled the "world culture" (see above). In any culture, people have to deal with birth and death; with the worlds of predecessors, consociates, contemporaries, and successors (Schutz, 1967: 142-43); with "the phenomenon of growing older together" (Schutz, 1967: 103), with interpenetration of immediately observed and symbolically experienced (semiological) universes. Those constitute existential parameters of human being, because no society can escape them. They also constitute variables of a sort, because each society, social group and individual deal with them in a specific way, thus bringing in variations of a cultural character, or, in the positivist jargon, different values of essentially the same fundamental properties. An important caveat is in order: the values in question are not represented homogeneously; the differences are not just quantitative, but qualitative par excellence. I believe Welch's critique was specifically aimed against inappropriate quantification (and therefore, homogenisation) of non-identical qualities. If this is the case, I support it wholeheartedly. However, healthy attention to particulars should not lead to unrestrained

relativism: culture specificity alone cannot invalidate cross-cultural comparisons.

The concept of political culture is a useful tool of comparative research, when we remember that the studies of tolerance in one society could be matched by, for the sake of example, the studies of discipline in another. What goes under the name "trust" here may go under the name "naivety" there. No efforts at a precise linguistic match can change the fact that the word "believe" is simply not read the same way in mostly secular and predominantly religious societies. And even if we postulate the same function, variously performed from one nation to another, we have to be absolutely sure that the function really exists as such, and is indeed correlated with what we believe are its outward manifestations.

Though the concept of political culture may be legitimately applied to any social entity with formally structured and institutionalized relations of governance within it, we are most interested in its traditional usage with respect to the nation-states. Whatever else may be said on local, regional, and subnational political cultures, no one would disprove their embeddedness within a broader political formation, recognized as a hub of national sovereignty and, therefore, a power monopolist and a supreme judge for lower-level formations. However, its sovereignty is of a legal and conventional nature, and does not make it independent of the constituent units in substance. An embedded character of subnational political-cultural constellations is matched by a nested character of the national political culture.

The political culture of a nation is a process, rather than a system of thing-like manifestations. This is not to disclaim that political culture of a previous period lingers on, due to its inevitable objectification in institutions and roles transmitted from the past to the present. Institutions structure action; however, they cannot determine its ad hoc content in full. The "live" part of the action is capable of outweighing its structural-institutional shackles. Were it not so, once found, institutional forms would endure forever. The very fact of change witnesses to the relative strength of the processual, agency-driven side versus institutionalized, materialized components of the national political culture.

And yet, institutions matter. They constitute the social environment of the action, provide it with its ways and means, shape its outcome, and bear its immediate impact. They lend material substance to the ongoing political action, whose constraints and opportunities

are both habitually influenced by the existing institutions. Institutions are obviously more than an objectified political culture of a nation, since they are also products of intercultural learning, cross-cultural "contamination" and spillover effects. Quite often, observed functions of an institution seem to be too generic or too narrowly technical to justify attention of a culture analyst. Nevertheless, the symbolic, or cultural field of interaction is still present there, and the institution itself still exists in space and time, meaning social space and historical time, if we are speaking of human society. Social space and historical time define any institution as a cultural entity, and significantly modify even its generic functions. Space and time limitations unbreakably tie institutions to a specific group of their human creators and operators, and, therefore, to this group's culture and modes of behaviour. Institutions are taken into political culture analysis as factors influencing agency, not as the things in themselves. When understood semiotically, institutions should not be presented as fully accomplished, unchangeable meaning-contexts. They are the meaning-contexts continuously reactivated by human agency, and it is in this capacity of action engines, containers, inhibitors and modifiers that institutions should enter politico-culturalist research.

Political culture is not equal to polity or society as a whole, nor to the sum total of society's political dynamics. What comes under the name of political culture refers to relatively stable, recurrent patterns of social behaviour with respect to government and governance in general. Political culture includes a system of dispositions and attitudes, informed by widely shared, though not always self-conscious, understandings of the nature of legitimate authority and its limits, acceptable and unacceptable ways of managing people and things, of dealing with superiors and inferiors, promoting one's cause against competing claims of other individuals and groups. Political culture shapes the ways people address basic issues of power and authority. It activates conventional schemes of behaviour on existential, rather than conceptual levels. It organizes commonsensical knowledge of how to "get on" with authorities without bringing this knowledge up into the light of intellectual reflection and theory building. As a force of social organization, it includes not only mental, or emotional, but also behavioural and institutional components.

That is why we strongly suggest that traditional equating of political culture and ideology, or even presenting ideology as a form of political culture, is essentially wrong. It

is misleading, because it confuses the intellectual product of a quasi-theoretical nature (ideology) with the system of practical, behavioural and largely unreflexive predispositions to action (political culture). Ideology is systematically articulated, openly declared and propagated, if not imposed upon its addressee by its creators and distributors. Political culture is articulated only indirectly, through its ideological, institutional and organizational echoes; it does not have to be officially declared for its activation, and the only way to "propagate" it is through the series of changes in political and social texture of a society, and, hence, in dominant modes of group behaviour.

It should be emphasised with all clarity that political culture is not behaviour as such, but underlying patterns of behaviour that may structure quite different manifestations. Political culture is a collective property; its simple disaggregation in individual attitudes and individual modes of behaviour will not reveal much of its inner structure. Behaviour as such is guided by goals, intentions, circumstances, and social environment. Culture shapes both goals and intentions, gives meaning to circumstances and constitutes the qualitative dimension of the environment. It does not fully coincide with either of those. As a form of social schematics, it exists on a substantially higher plane of intercourse than individual behaviour or interpersonal exchange. Culture saturates individual behaviour with meaning-contexts that are formed as by-products of a society's movement through history. Historical duration, recurrence and relative stability are obvious aspects of any culture, be it all-human or global, civilizational, regional, national or subnational. Hence, even the concept of group culture is open to certain doubt, if the group in question has not yet proven itself as an actor of however limited historical endurance and/or significance.

The logical and objective counterpart of a society's culture is a historical path of development the society had to go through. Any national culture is a living echo of the nation's past. The echo's analogy is, nevertheless, not quite accurate, because no culture can ever repeat or reproduce an event in all unique particulars of its original "clamour." More importantly, events and culture belong to different ontological fields, much the same way as actual behaviour and its recurrent social schematic. Persistent confusing of these two fields should be regarded as a gross mistake, still present in much of the conventional behaviourist research on political culture topics - the research that is routinely buttressed by what has to

be properly characterized as public opinion polls, not political culture measurements.

Political culture may be seen as a dominant mode of symbolic reproduction of power relations in a given society. It is a symbolic reproduction, first of all, because it is indirect. Political culture has no independent existence beyond institutions, behaviour, traditions and psychology of living people. These are political culture's outlets; we have no other way to address it but by looking at its observable manifestations, hypothesizing those shielded from direct observation, and interpreting both. Political culture belongs to a symbolic realm, secondly, because it is a system (or an agglomerate) of signs, that is, meaning indicators representing something other than their material body. Signs normally make sense only when they are placed in the appropriate semantic field and when we know the rules of syntax that should be applied to them. Analogously, political culture signs should be interpreted, not just registered and taken at their face value: the appearance might belong to the body of a sign, and conceal its actual meaning. Thirdly, political culture is inescapably symbolic, because it involves representation. Political culture represents the historical path of a nation and historical peculiarities of the struggle among its various contenders for power, something which, in phenomenological parlance, belongs to the world of predecessors. However, it does not represent things past in their exact, original configuration. Political culture communicates, rather, our own impressions of the past, conscious and unconscious lessons drawn from the predecessors' experience, our, in a word, symbolic meeting with the past. It should be expected that the worlds of contemporaries and successors are also present in political culture of a nation, the first one as a symbolic median of the actual meaning-structures in people's behaviour, and the second one as a current vision of still unlived portions of the contemporaries' life lines and their prospective continuation by known and unknown heirs.

Political culture is, therefore, a part of the semiosphere, as conceptualized by Yu. M. Lotman (1990). Political culture shares with the whole of semiosphere its function of a "generator of information" (Lotman, 1990: 127). Just as the whole of the semiosphere, which is defined as "the totality of semiotic acts," political culture "possesses memory which transforms the history of the system into its actually functioning mechanism," and includes not only already created cultural "texts," but also "programs for generating future texts"

(Lotman and Uspenskij, 1984: xii). Because of that, the study of political culture enables us to elucidate links between the history and the present state of a political system, specifically on the national, but also on the subnational, and, when applicable, supranational levels. Since a political culture complex contains "programs for generating future texts" (implicit and explicit rules of power-oriented behaviour and any behaviour with respect to authority), research in political culture includes an element of prediction and allows us to extrapolate from the present to the future. Political culture studies are indispensable, when one needs to establish an island of stability in the sea of change, or to anchor a prognosis in something other than always subjective, always provisional, if not outright imaginary, calculation of actors' preferences. Studies in political culture are no less valuable when change itself is being probed, since even a chaotic change has a direction and may reveal some internal logic, usually supplied by nothing else than the established behavioural codes, that undergo an appropriate modification to meet new problems and circumstances.

How shall we study political culture from an interpretivist standpoint? This chapter attempted to answer this question, drawing upon the insights of structuralism, post-structuralism, and phenomenology, as leading schools in contemporary interpretivist theorizing. Attentiveness to the subjective meaning-contexts of the actors, judgmental cautiousness, ad-hoc generalizations and ideal-typical (re)construction, conscious refusal to seek one and only (therefore, reified) explanations were all noted as distinctive features of an interpretivist approach. We surely did not exhaust the list. We could have added (against the objections of some reputable interpretivists) an insistence on the active, primary role of human consciousness, which might be captured or even "pre-programmed" in "structures", but never replaced by them. Since the point is far from being unanimously supported by all interpretivist thinkers, we shall leave it as it is for now. Perhaps it is more important to delineate some general area of consent than to make an inventory of all intersecting and mutually complementing positions.

Concrete applications of the interpretivist position in political culture studies need not be the same from one author to another. R. Tucker (1987; 1990), for example, looks at historical events, while R. Merelman (1991) or A. Berger (1990) examine mass culture. E. Buker (1987) scrutinised narratives of two local communities, while "grid-group" theorists

attempt to seek universal applications of a singular two-dimensional scheme (which exposes them to profound criticism with regard to the "formalism and resulting abstractness" (Welch, 1993: 146)). Whatever the focus, any political culture study deals with politics, with the way people live in power-penetrated society, and with the way people's values mediate their political and social choices.

In this study, I combine a historical and sociological analysis with an examination of developments in the realm of social consciousness. Any interpretivist analysis of political culture must be attentive to the latter aspect. And yet, the most important source of data, the one that contains its "verification" within its own body, is given by actual events in the countries studied, and the potential events that have never materialized. In the following chapters, the event analysis will be invoked continuously, both to complement other methods of interpretivist inquiry and to counterbalance their alleged and real subjectivism.

Chapter 3. POLITICAL CULTURE AND NATIONALITY IN SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET STUDIES

Political Culture and Visions of Sovietology

The concept of political culture was applied to the Soviet reality as early as it was coined. From the 1950s on, numerous studies attempted to employ it as a central or intervening variable, or just for the purposes of description, to shed some additional light on Soviet polity and society. As Sovietology made use of a rather broad range of disciplines and subdisciplines - from engineering to economy to public management to arts and literature - political culture has been invoked in quite different contexts, making it difficult to compare various uses of the term among themselves. Soviet studies underwent all the changes one might have expected with the shifts of grand paradigms in the social and political sciences, which served as prime sources of methodological innovation for the field. Unsurprisingly, political culture theorizations in Sovietology followed the bigger trends and had to accommodate intellectual fashions that accompanied periods of dominance of the totalitarian school, developmental models, modernization theory, interest group theory, new statist/institutionalist explanations, corporatist accounts and so on (Almond and Roselle, 1993: 28). Whether Soviet studies as a whole could be regarded a part of the academic mainstream was also a debated question. When, finally, Sovietology had (almost) found its due place under the rubric of "area studies", which were somewhat reluctantly claimed by Comparative Politics, new studies arose, questioning the very compatibility of political culture research and "the comparative project" as developed by now (Welch, 1993).

Developments in the "outer world" beyond academic walls appeared much more dramatic. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the practical dissolution of the "world socialist system", the fate of Soviet studies seemed to be sealed. The question of the nature of Soviet political culture and the most appropriate ways to study it moved out of the realm of political science into the realm of history and historiography. Decision-makers would not be interested in the political culture of a polity that had ceased to exist, just as they would not discuss the "national character" of an erstwhile nation. By the same logic, the mainstream "science of politics" prefers to deal with actual politics, rather than its historic recollection. All of a sudden, the political culture of "real socialism", exemplified by the former Soviet Union, became an artifact for some future "archaeologist of knowledge": too close to be

studied by cultural anthropology and too remote to present any interest for Comparative or International Politics.

However, the obituary proved premature. As new unexpected problems blocked the former communist states' ascension to the liberal-democratic ways of life, the search for the mechanism of inertia started in earnest. The problem could not be of a structural character: almost each and every institution of former socialist society in any East European country has been changed, destroyed, or substantially modified. Both political and economic structures are malleable and should eventually reconfigure, if conscious and persistent efforts to change them are exerted by the respective government for a long-enough period. In the postcommunist world, not only national governments participated in the effort. Immense international and transnational resources have been employed as well, of which the IMF and the World Bank form but a tip on the iceberg. As Yeltsin's success in the 1996 Russian presidential election showed, most of the people, by then, were unwilling to support the communist candidate. Nascent pressure groups and political parties took a vested interest in the project.

And yet the radiant capitalist future did not materialize. International aid only increased the outstanding portion of the national debt. Communists returned to parliaments all over Eastern Europe, with the exception of Latvia and Estonia, using the very mechanism of free, contested elections they had opposed for so long. The liberal-democratic promise brought in its wake the post-Soviet bureaucratic-authoritarian governments, whose executive profile is not wholly dissimilar to their better known counterparts in Latin America and elsewhere. All of this raises a number of questions. If institutions and practices cannot be held responsible for twists and turns of the postcommunist transformation, then what can? If structure proved too weak despite all efforts, what made it such?

The answer, in my view, is culture, political culture in particular. Since the first political-culturalist studies were published, what has been constantly and continuously stressed by researchers was the view of political culture as a reservoir of stability and, possibly, the force of inertia, curtailing and moulding the process of change itself. Its embeddedness in the past cannot disqualify it from directly shaping the present. On the contrary: political culture is precisely that link between the past and the future that pierces

the present, making it very much what it is. Political culture is not just history of the present structure; it is a template of all previous structures interacting with each other in multiple ways, as they are brought to bear on contemporary practices and institutions. This quality exempts political culture from the museum of antiquity and presents its study as something going far beyond the limits of the "archaeology of knowledge". It vindicates much of the old Sovietology and revamps it, making a bridge to post-Soviet studies possible.

However, the accounts that stress inertia and continuity display only one, though significant, side of political culture theory. Political culture is a historical phenomenon: as such, it is prone to change. The debate on continuity versus change in Soviet and Russian political culture addresses key issues of the whole problem area. The totalitarian school and other "ideological deterministic" (Meyer, 1993: 171) explanations, despite the lack of dynamism in their visions of the Soviet political system as a monolithic, immutable entity, in fact indirectly helped to render plausible the communists' own argument on the success of change the party initiated. Both sides to the dispute converged on the view of "proletarian cultural revolution" as being presumably capable of altering the inherited cultural patterns completely. If this were so, the political culture of the socialist state would be best described as artificially constructed, rather than naturally developed. In other words, the political culture of victorious socialism should have been recognized as a product of deliberate social change. If the change in political culture is so easily achieved, we can no more regard political culture of any given nation solely as a reservoir of stability and recurrence. We should see it rather as both a result and a vehicle of social and political transformations, including even the short-term disturbances in the established ways of life of a nation.

On the other hand, those theorists who underscored the failure of Soviet authorities in their massive effort at resocialization of the subject population according to the preconceived plan, were essentially arguing the view of political culture as the primary vehicle of historical continuity. F. Barghoorn, Z. Brzezinski, E. Keenan, R. Pipes, and S. White, among other advocates of this position, were tracing historical lineages from early Muscovite monarchy to Russian Empire to the Soviet Union, pointing out similar patterns of absolutism, despotism and servility throughout. In this scrupulous search, Soviet political culture appeared sometimes barely distinguishable from the political culture of the Russian

monarchy, sampled as early as the 15-16th century.

Interestingly enough, both the "continuity" group and the "change" group in Sovietology in fact concentrated their attention on substantially the same components of the Russian political-cultural complex: its autocratic and antidemocratic elements. If in the first case those were attributed to Russian historical heritage, in the second they have been perceived as something created by the communist political regime or, as R. Tucker argued, even by the pre-revolutionary communist movement, as contrived by its leaders (1987: 33-50). Continuity or change, Russian political culture was inexorably doomed to perpetuate authoritarian rule. Russia's own liberal and democratic tradition has been practically ignored by all parties to the dispute.

The first Western studies attempting to modify the established view of Soviet political culture as "subject" or, at best, "subject-participatory," according to the Almondian scheme (see Almond and Verba, 1963) started to be published not earlier than the 1980s. In one of them, DiFranceisco and Gitelman (1984) argued that the Soviet system had in reality provided for rather broad participation that, most importantly, was not limited to the one artificially induced from the top. Applying logic similar to the rational actor model in studies of pluralist societies, the authors stressed the personalized character of unsolicited participation of ordinary citizens in various locally available power structures, where informal and semi-formal communication and networking were skilfully used for personal purposes and gains. The ever present stratum of more or less genuine political activists has also been noted.

In another persuasive satement, Stephen F. Cohen showed how "inadequate historical analysis leads to inadequate political analysis," and sharply criticized "the Whig consensus in Soviet studies," with its central thesis "of an 'unbroken continuity,' or 'straight line,'" between what in reality were dramatically different epochs in Russian and Soviet history (1985: 5, 21). With a wealth of historical material, Cohen demonstrated the factual falsity of this thesis and exposed its methodological flaws: deep ahistoricism, reliance on "some concept of predestination," lack of contextual sensitivity, and an implicit teleology in treating political traditions as if they were "virtually autonomous and deterministic" (1985: 51, 67). The researcher advocated a more balanced and realistic approach to Soviet history, which

he saw as open to contradictory tendencies and harbouring conflicting models of political development. Echoing H. Arendt, he made important distinctions between Bolshevism and Stalinism, and also between Leninist revolutionary dictatorship and Stalinist totalitarian police state. NEP policies, initiated by Lenin and subsequently epitomized by N. Bukharin and the Bukharinist Right in the party, were quoted as "both an alternative to and premonition of Stalinism" (Cohen, 1985: 77). Finally, Cohen distinguished between reformers and conservatives inside the post-Brezhnev CPSU and connected these two camps to the respective constituencies in Soviet populace at large. He concluded by suggesting that the reformers' victory was not impossible and might in fact be in the making.

Democratic rather than autocratic inclinations were discovered in Russian political culture of the perestroika period by Jeffrey W. Hahn (1993), who specifically addressed the issue of continuity and change, and systematically compared the results of the local survey he conducted in the Russian city of Yaroslavl' in 1990 to the American pre-election National Election Study of 1976. Hahn's methodology, while quite in line with the behaviourist tradition in instrumenta and reasoning, rendered the diametrically opposite picture of the Soviet political culture. No recurring patterns of dominance and servility have been found. Instead, "on all dimensions of political culture measured... - political efficacy, political trust, support for popular elections, political interest and knowledge - the evidence suggests that Russians come closer to what we find in Western industrial democracies than to what we would expect to find if the traditional cultural patterns ascribed to the period of Russian autocracy had persisted" (Hahn, 1993: 318).

In 1991-95, sympathetic studies of democratic and freedom-loving elements in Russian political culture have been undertaken by N. Petro, R. Sakwa and some other researchers. Their analysis is more closely conforming to the historic interpretivist model, rather than the behaviourist one. By concentrating on usually disregarded facts in Russian history, like the Novgorod veche, Zemskii Sobor, zemstvo in general and other manifestations of collective decision-making in both local and national governance; by emphasizing the traditionally mitigating role of the Church; by following other avenues of research that witnessed to a clearly subdominant, but nevertheless present proto-democratic tradition, the scholars were able to defy overdeterministic "autocratic" accounts of Russian

political culture, so popular in the Cold War Sovietology and historiography.

Yet, the totalitarian model, as several researchers have recently argued (Bova, 1993: 242; Giddens, 1985: 301; Motyl, 1992), despite much well-grounded criticism, cannot be simply disregarded in the studies of Soviet political culture. Together with other studies of mass society (G. Lebon; J. Ortega y Gasset), it provides useful tools in the analysis of concrete preconditions and mechanisms of social atomization, ideologically and politically forced mobilization, state control, manipulation of culture symbols, exploitation of instrumental scientific rationality and the like. In S. Welch's words, it helps to explain how "atomization and disorganization left individuals open to the assertion of the total claim, to co-option into a social movement whose operating principles were rationalized by science and displayed as myth" (1993: 90-91).

Though the origins of totalitarian model are usually traced back to H. Arendt, C. Friedrich and Z. Brzezinski, its arrival had been very much facilitated by the works of several representatives of the older generation of the German Frankfurt school (see Arato, 1978: 10-20). Another important source for the concept formation can be found in the studies of Russian national character written by such emigré philosophers as N. Berdyaev, G. Fedotov, S. Frank or L. Shestov. If the Frankfurt theorists concentrated mostly on the "critique of instrumental reason" and "central plan fetishism," domestic thinkers attempted to delineate those features in mass psychology that made the Russian public conducive to the inception of new-age slavery. Admiration of force and the tradition to obey authorities were rightly or wrongly cited as distinctive traits of Russian national psyche. Underdevelopment of civil society, autocratic voluntarism in high politics, the absence of clearly established legal or constitutional constraints on authorities, and early in history uprooted opportunities of compromising dialogue between the state and the public all, in the view of these authors, precipitated the propensity of Russian masses to switch from the periods of mindless obedience to the spontaneous short-term upheavals and riots that almost certainly only perpetuated legitimacy of brutal power. Soviet communism was described as a logical, though unfortunate, continuation of this centuries-old tradition (Berdiaev, 1937; see also Tsipko, 1990).

Russian emigré thinkers have also raised a question of major significance to

subsequent studies of Russian and Soviet political culture, pointing at the mutually alienating gap between elite and masses. This implied the existence of two irreconcilable cultures, none of which could lay claim to a nationally consolidating role or even true representation of the societally prevalent belief system. Inevitably, the elite culture had to monopolize this last function, thus imposing itself on an essentially disenfranchised society.

The political culture of Stalinism could therefore be analyzed as either elite creation or the offshoot of mass psychology. Most of the specialists in Soviet policy upheld the first position. This was a distinctive feature of the totalitarian model that explained "outputs as initiated by the central leader, and as implemented through ... the political process without significant modification" (Almond and Roselle, 1993: 51). With the end of Stalin's period and the Khrushchev "thaw" that followed, the totalitarian explanation was gradually modified and replaced by other models. Yet, the elite bias of the mainstream Sovietology remained, presumably reflecting something real in the nature of the society studied. Thus, bureaucratic politics and the interest group model, when applied to Soviet realities, were usually narrowed down to a picture of elites' competition, bargaining and collaboration, that produced sometimes erratic, and sometimes consistent policies.

By concentrating on decision making and policy implementation, researchers were led to acknowledge the internal diversity of the Soviet elites and the respective variety of their organizational, if not political cultures (Allison, 1971). However, even earlier than that, under the impact of developmental and bureaucratic politics models in post-Stalin studies of the Soviet Union, as well as the real dramatic changes unfolding in Soviet state and society, all the initiators of the totalitarian explanation adopted a more relaxed view on such issues as the centrality of terror, unanimity of the political process, salience of the top leader and the internal coherence of the elite in general. Writing in 1964 together with S. Huntington, Z. Brzezinski, for example, introduced important corrections to the view of Soviet politics as political and ideological monolith. The Orwellian picture of totalitarian dictatorship that had monopolized all instruments of power and penetrated society to the effect of its virtual decomposition was replaced by a more sophisticated portrait of power games, negotiations and confrontations among competing elite actors, each pursuing specific goals and wielding such instruments of influence as one was able to secure. The assumption

of a "bargaining" character of Soviet elite accommodation enabled Sovietologists to analyze "the nature, stakes, and outcomes of this process in light of the 'political resources' available to various participants and would-be participants ... at different stages in the formulation, execution, and reformulation of public policies in the post-Stalin era" (Fleron and Hoffmann, 1993: 7).

Carl J. Friedrich, in the revised edition of Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy (1965), also noted important changes in Soviet state and society since Stalin's death. Moving closer to a bureaucratic politics model, he stressed the existence of the "rival bureaucracies of a totalitarian dictatorship" (1965: 213), pointing out that

> The division of the party into two hierarchies, intended to increase its control over industry and blurring in some sectors the distinction between government and party, will create new problems because those functionaries preoccupied with production, whether industrial or agricultural, may increasingly neglect other functions. (1965: 51)

However, this idea, which opened an avenue for promising analyses of competing elites and their respective political/managerial cultures, was not developed further. Instead, the wholly elitist picture of the nature of Soviet polity was reiterated, and, most unfortunately, the role of the leader was allocated the significance that had already become a thing of the past. While all the developments of the Khrushchev period indicated an increased importance of individual corporate and regional administrative groups, the editor still maintained that "in view of the total dependence of the party upon the leader at its head, it can be argued that the party does not possess a corporate existence of its own" (Friedrich, 1965: 48). We need to add only that this edition of the book appeared after the 1964 swift and peaceful ouster of Khrushchev from all top positions in the state and the party, which by all accounts best resembled some Soviet variant of a corporate takeover.

H. Arendt's brand of the totalitarian model was rather distinct in a sense that from the very beginning it had been more balanced between elites and masses as key explanatory variables. She was also more cautious in explicitly restricting its applicability to the period since Stalin's "second revolution" (1929-30) till the death of the dictator. While contemporary thinkers sometimes blur important differences between the immediate postrevolutionary regime in Russia and its totalitarian successor, asserting that "Leninism

in its heyday was one of the principal sources of modern totalitarianism" (Taylor, 1995: 205), Arendt emphasized the novelty of totalitarian rule, counterposing it to Leninist "one-party dictatorship" which "added only one more class to the already developing social stratification of the country (1966: 319). In addition to descriptions of terror, ideology and propaganda, familiar in more conventional studies, she offered deep insights into concrete sociological and psychological mechanisms of mass support for totalitarian regimes, starting with disintegration of a modern nation-state and decomposition of its class structure and ending with newly formed feelings of loneliness, uprootedness and superfluousness that push socially atomized individuals to embrace totalitarian movements and their universalist claims.

For the purposes of political culturalist study, Arendt's book still retains its heuristic value, which is by no means restricted to the period in question. To enumerate but several methodologically important ideas, we need to appreciate, first, the degree to which the elite and mass attitudes were described as mutually reinforcing and interactively positing each other ("The Temporary Alliance Between the Mob and the Elite", in Arendt, 1966: 326-40). Were this idea to be taken as a guidance for further research, numerous steadfast antinomies between the "elite" and the "mass" political culture in the former Soviet Union could have been, perhaps, avoided, opening the way to more clear understanding of both - as somewhat differing variants of the same quality. The "elite" culture of Russian revolutionary movement could have been elucidated through the detailed analysis of its lumpen-proletarian sources. On the other hand, the elite-mass rapprochement, whereby previously disfranchised masses eagerly partake in ideologically inspired "radical destruction of every existing creed, value, and institution" (Arendt, 1966: 337), would appear as something much more than a result of simple manipulation or "brainwashing" usually invoked to describe the elite-mass articulation under totalitarianism.

Secondly, terror, domination and propaganda alone or even a combination of all those taken together with any other consciously developed policies, cannot by themselves explain the prevalent intellectual mood of the time which permitted all the horrors to be committed and rationalized in the first place. After all, mass terror demanded plenty of executioners. Totalitarianism indeed succeeded in organizing guilt for the majority of population, in

smearing its crimes along the whole surface of society, thus multiplying responsibility to the point of virtual annihilation of its very meaning. If everyone is guilty, there is no one left to blame. To understand how this had become possible, we once again need to revert to masses "who had lost their home in the world and now were prepared to be reintegrated into eternal, all-dominating forces which by themselves would bear man ... to the shores of safety" (Arendt, 1966: 350). The deterministic ideology of Soviet communism had found fertile ground in mass fatalism, alienation, and the hope born out of despair. This ground had been prepared by wars, revolutions and pogroms, which constituted a larger part of the early twentieth-century Russian history. "One-dimensional" man of the totalitarian polity was crafted from the mass which already measured zero on all scales of importance. The political culture of such a mass could be described as absence of any culture whatsoever, if the word "culture", in more recent academic circulation, has not been stretched to include practically all phenomena irreducible to purely natural forces.

Yet another insight of remarkable relevance to the present-day situation in postcommunist societies concerns "the delusion of human omnipotence through organization" which H. Arendt (1966: 387-88) aptly noted in the totalitarian movement. Not only does this observation place totalitarian ideologies and political cultures squarely among the bastard descendants of the Enlightenment tradition, which, of course, has become a commonplace by now (see Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972); it also tells us something about the way the current transition from socialism to capitalism had to be implemented in Russia and elsewhere. No wonder shock therapy policies have been portrayed as "neo-Bolshevist" approach to economic reform by a number of critics. For another illustration of the same admiration of a sheer force of the will and corresponding lack of humility before the unknown and never experienced before on the part of nascent postcommunist social engineers, one may not look farther than nation- and state-building policies of the newly independent states gambling on ethnic nationalisms of "titular nationality": once again, the laborious work of creating modern citizenry on the basis of interethnic compromise and democracy of consensus has been abandoned in favour of deceitfully simple solutions of ethnonational "streamlining" of the inherited diversity.

The totalitarian model in Soviet studies was succeeded by several approaches

drawing upon the behaviourist paradigm that came into being as a reaction against legalist and speculative philosophical theorizing of the preceding epoch. The behaviourist revolution that swept social and political sciences in the 1950s and the 1960s was largely fed by the use of advanced quantitative methods, most notably survey research and sophisticated statistical analysis. The first attempts to apply these methods to the Soviet realities had been undertaken in the early 1950s, that is, virtually simultaneously with their debut appearance in sociology. Of those first studies, the most known remains the Harvard Refugee Interview Project (Inkeles and Bauer, 1959). According to Alfred G. Meyer,

> Many of its findings were in conflict with the images conveyed by the totalitarian model. In their survey work, the members of the Harvard team discovered informal behaviour and informal organizations underneath the totalitarian facade, a second economy, beginnings of a civil society, social stratification, including the persistence of pre-revolutionary status advantages, role conflicts, and ethical notions opposed to Party doctrine. (1993: 170)

This information allowed scholars to substantially correct the then dominant picture of the Soviet polity, associated primarily with the findings that discovery of the Smolensk archives made possible (see Fainsod, 1958). Though political culture was not made a specific object of the Harvard Refugee Interview Project, many of its conclusions bore direct relevance to the problem.

First, the class nature of the Soviet society in Weberian terms of social status, prestige, and life chances, as derived from both wealth and power, had been clearly demonstrated. This meant the absence of the objective social foundations for a homogeneous political culture, despite all efforts of the Soviet authorities at totalitarian organization, wholesale ideological reshaping of society and elimination of distinctive social and economic markers between various constituent groups and subgroups.

Second, the discovery of informal behaviour and organizations further corrected the previously unquestioned image of a totalitarian monolith based on coercive mobilization eschewing any initiative which had not been approved by authorities. The notorious gap between "the word and the action", which was openly acknowledged in Khrushchev's speech at the XXth Party Congress, had finally made its way into the Western picture of Soviet society, this time relating to the "masses", and not just "elite", as before. The lesson for the

future political culture research grew out of the recognition of the multilayered nature of political-cultural phenomena, with each other layer's boundaries formed not even by rather easily detectable social, economic, generational, or political stratifications, but, perhaps, more importantly, by different domains of personalized action and various normative structures serving these domains. Conclusions of this kind were not developed at the time, but the gate for them had been opened.

Finally, the findings of the HIP project paved the way to completely new theorizations of both the Soviet political system and the political culture(s) it harboured: to the application of a number of pluralist models (see Almond and Roselle, 1993: 42-49) ranging from classical interest group theory (H. Gordon Skilling and F. Griffiths, 1971) to corporatism (Meyer, 1965; Bunce and Echols, 1980; Teague, 1994) to the studies of policy networks, coalitions and shifting alliances based on the nature of the problem under consideration, various means to solve it available to different groups of actors, and career stakes related to the matter (Allison, 1971; Hough and Fainsod, 1979; Lowenhardt, 1981). In all these cases, the political culture researcher would have to deal with an intensely diversified array of values and norms associated with each of the actors, and would have to look for the ways to construct the national political culture, if it were still considered a relevant concept, as a result of their interaction, bearing marks of both relative political "weights" of the groups involved and their respective histories.

Behaviourist studies of the Soviet and early post-Soviet political culture now boast three nation-wide surveys with data sets largely comparable to each other and the designs that sometimes consciously attempt to replicate Almond and Verba's variables, testing them on previously untrodden ground. In addition to the HIP project, two others, that managed to achieve a similarly high degree of representativeness, need to be mentioned. Interestingly, the closer they come to the present moment, the more important place they reserve for political culture problematics in the overall survey design.

While the Harvard project had been most concerned with the class or quasi-class nature of the Soviet society (Berliner, 1993: 180), the Soviet Interview Project, or SIP, mainly associated with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, tapped deeper into the attitudes and value structures. Though the problem of political support to the regime

remained a central issue in both studies, the SIP researchers developed a finer picture of gradations in alienation, noticing important connections between the intensity of formal and informal participation, generational and educational differences, and income inequality. They were also able to reach a counterintuitive conclusion on the positive relation of the participation factor to "unconventional" behaviour usually considered as detrimental to the regime's stability: "refusing to vote, listening to BBC and other foreign broadcasts, reading and distributing samizdat ... and participating in other unsanctioned activities" (Millar, 1993: 187). Political attitudes of "the best and the brightest" seemed to indicate the weakest support for the communist regime, the highest rate of alienation from its key values, and a clear predisposition toward "unconventional" behaviour. The youngest and the best educated were not inclined to admit the priority of the state power over individual rights and civil liberties, or to concur in the state control of the whole of economy. Significantly for the would-be application of the rational choice models, the researchers maintained that

> Other things equal, support for regime values and for the institutional structure of the Soviet social system increases with increases in material rewards. The problem, however, is that material benefits do not keep pace. (Millar, 1993: 186)

Several authors of behaviourist persuasion noted that the totalitarian picture of mobilized participation was clearly at odds with reality. Individual actors, each pursuing unique personal goals, learned to use resources of the state and "windows of opportunity" presented by its local institutions, to generate particularized benefits for themselves, their families and friends. The development witnessed to the increasingly pluralized character of the Soviet society and its political culture, which DiFranceisco and Gitelman characterized as "covert-participant" (1984: 619). The authors suggested that

> the Russian-Soviet case (like others, especially in the Third World) demonstrates that there is no ineluctable progression from parochial to subject to participant political cultures. The Soviet system, like many others, is syncretic, adapting traditional clientilist modes to what appears to be institutions for democratic participation. (1984: 605)

With their attention concentrated on policy implementation, rather than policy making, and on a personal, rather than group level of social interaction, the researchers looked at political culture as a dimension of individual behaviour. The category of "covert political

participation" helped to establish the domain of "privatized politics" which was further described as "the interaction between the citizen as client or supplicant looking for private benefit and the representative of the system interpreting and implementing policy for this individual" (DiFranceisco and Gitelman, 1984: 604).

The grand design tradition of the HIP and the SIP projects is currently followed by the New Soviet Citizen public opinion survey, started by the scholars mostly associated with the University of Iowa in June 1990 (Miller, Reisinger, and Hesli, 1993). The survey was conducted in Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania, which allowed for cross-national comparison. The study was immediately distinguished by the fact that the samples, for the first time ever, were drawn from the actual parent populations of the respective republics (and not emigré communities, as before). Secondly, local Soviet scholars actively participated in all stages of the project, consciously devised as a joint Soviet-American undertaking. Perestroika opened the door to heretofore unimaginable collaboration. However, operational variables did not differ much from the earlier surveys. The bulk of research questions has still clustered around such issues as alienation/support, participation, political and interpersonal trust, tolerance, deference to authorities, valuation of liberty, and rights consciousness. In general, the survey focused on the perspectives for democratic development and attempted to check the degree of potential public support to democratic transformation. In this respect, it marked a dramatic deviation from the preceding behaviourist projects that had been almost exclusively concerned with the support to the existing state of affairs. Political change, rather than political stability of Soviet society, became the main research question now.

With this shift, the traditional political culture problematic acquired completely new meaning. Enduring patterns of political behaviour were downplayed to emphasize what previously eluded scholars of Soviet political culture: the propensity of value structures to change over time, thus reflecting profound changes in economy, polity and society. In fact, the Iowa scholars replaced the outmoded static image of Soviet political culture with a more dynamic and more realist one, completing in this way the job started by the Harvard Interview Project. However, the static model had been so firmly established in academia that the new results contradicting its basic assumptions were interpreted as a sign of waning of political culture theory in general. William M. Reisinger, for one example, argued that "to

the extent that one stresses the importance of a society's political culture in understanding its politics, one plays down the importance of generational or demographic change as well as of learning in response to current events" (Miller, Reisinger, and Hesli, 1993: 274). The divorce between political culture "pessimists" and modernization "optimists", each arguing their case on different material taken from either "bad" or "good" parts of Russian and Soviet history, reappeared again in another false dichotomy between "survey researchers" (presumably more sensitive to the value changes that have followed the development of the Soviet system and, therefore, pointing at better chances for democracy in contemporary Russia) and "historians" backing a dreary inertialist picture of the Russian political culture and historical continuity. Of course, in this false counterposition, "the argument for the importance of a `Russian' political culture ... is faring poorly" (Miller, Reisinger, and Hesli, 1993: 274). It must be added, though, that only one, particular view on Russian political culture is vulnerable to this criticism. Only sweeping and one-sided inertialist claims can be beaten by demonstration of empirical evidence for newly emerged values that are conducive to democracy. More flexible political-culturalist accounts accommodate these findings with ease. After all, whence does it follow that recently "discovered" democratic values appeared out of the thin air just yesterday, and were not present before, though in some suppressed, possibly even distorted form? "Historians" should not be rebuked for their seeking empirical evidence in the past, rather than the present, but only if their picture of that past appears monochrome, lopsided, or oversimplified.

Behaviourist projects did not exhaust the whole spectrum of political culture research in Sovietology. In fact, some people even argue that the "behaviourist revolution" has never occurred in communist studies (Fleron and Hoffmann, 1993: 9). The main reason, of course, was the tremendous difficulties of conducting survey research on Soviet people, effectively shielded from the outside world. The available data had been mostly of non-systematic, documentary and impressionistic nature. The problem of response bias plagued all studies that used emigré population as their primary source. No wonder the interpretivist accounts of Soviet political culture occupied the central stage of the discipline in pre-perestroika years.

The interpretivist research in political culture of communism is usually associated with scholars like R. Fagen, A. Meyer, L. Pye, R. Solomon, R. Tucker, and S. White (Welch,

1993: passim). Though S. Welch believes A. Brown to be "allied in this regard with the mainstream in political culture research" (1993: 47), in fact, we may find enough evidence to support the claim that Brown's own research is of a clearly mixed type, with strong interpretivist overtones. The same is probably true with respect to Frederick Barghoorn. The interpretivist inclinations of all political culture "historians", and most notably R. Pipes and Z. Brzezinski, are, of course, beyond any doubt. Other "historian" figures to cite in this connection include Cyril E. Black, E. Keenan, J. Thomas Sanders, Hedrick Smith et al. Interpretivist accounts of Russian and Soviet political culture are also much indebted to Russian emigré philosophers and some of the Western thinkers of Russian descent. Studies of the Russian national character and the social psychology of Russian intelligentsia, initiated by N. Berdiaev, S. Bulgakov, S. Frank, P. Struve and other prominent intellectuals of the Vekhi tradition (translated in Signposts, 1986); thoughts and writings on Russia by P. Sorokin; the "Eurasianist" theories by N. Trubetskoi and associates; the ideas of the Parisian Novyi grad group (G.P. Fedotov and others) all bear direct relevance to the interpretivist discussions of today (see Raeff, 1994). Several Western intellectuals of Russian descent continue this tradition now. Among the important interpretations of Russian political culture they have recently published, the works by Nicolai Petro, Marc Raeff and Richard Sakwa deserve most scrupulous attention. The latest wave of emigration from the former Soviet Union brought some new works in this genre, though definitely of a lesser academic value and often suffering from an excessively aggressive anti-Soviet and anti-Russian bias (cf. Alexander Yanov, 1987, or Vladimir Zviglianich, 1993). In noting this trend, Alexander Dallin was the first to observe that "[s]ome of the most vociferous affirmations of historical determinism, which sees the Soviet system as an extrapolation of the Russian past (at times accompanied by the view that `every nation gets the government it deserves'), have come from persons espousing the most militant and anti-Soviet positions" (1993: 132).

Interpretivist accounts are by definition more vulnerable to ideological distortions than, say, any positivist brand of "value free" conceptualizations. In the latter case, epistemological and philosophical decency requires at least an effort to be made to move in presumably desired direction of value neutral, non-normativist analysis. Interpretivists are less expected to do that, precisely because a good measure of subjectivity is required,

according to the canons of the genre. Still, naked subjectivism is as unwelcome here as anywhere else in academia. The important thing to remember is that an interpretivist endeavour can reach its goals only if the subjectivity exposed is not that of the interpreter, but that of the people who constitute the object of her study. As S. Welch, who subscribes to the view, stresses, "within political culture research, the defining feature of interpretivism is a conception of political culture as the `meaning' of political life, or the meaningful aspect of politics" (1993: 5). Meaning, however, is too broad a notion to qualify for an unambiguous status either conceptually or methodologically. Methodologically, we should distinguish between what seems meaningful to an external observer and what constitutes meaningful patterns of action to the participants. In Welch's terminology, this watershed marks the difference between "idealist interpretivism", which he criticizes, and "phenomenological interpretivism", which he endorses. Conceptually, "meaning" may be defined in a number of ways on either observer's or an agent's side of the political arena. Behaviourists tend to operationalize "meaning" through values, attitudes, and opinions held by the citizenry. Historians look for meaning in broad historic trends and landmark events of the national history. Anthropologists seek it in rites, rituals, and customs of a society, starting with the most mundane ones. Social psychologists tend to uncover meaning in patterns of collective interaction and group behaviour, which may not be self-consciously recognized and reflected upon by immediate participants. Institutionalists would derive political-cultural meaning from existing institutions of the political system, arguing, with Mary McAuley, that, to understand the political culture of communism, one will have to ask

> ... questions concerning the impact of institutional arrangements and not only institutional arrangements but also, for example, the type of revolution it was, the nature of the Communist party and the problems facing the leadership. (1984: 31-32)

Any vision of "meaning" on the observer's side is indeed "bountiful" (Pye, as cited in McAuley, 1984: 20).

Still more so on the agent's side. While Welch may be right, suggesting more attention to what is meaningful for the participants themselves as an antidote against idealist speculation (1993: 9), he fails to provide any concrete recipe for ascertaining that the researcher's account may actually grasp that evanescent reality. Even if an observer becomes

a participant herself, there is no way to tell that the meanings "processed" in her political activity are really the same that guide the activity of her closest counterparts, to say nothing about more distant and mediated participants. The phenomenological conception of meaning traces its source to social practices of the society under observation and implies that, once constituted, political-cultural meanings function as devices propelling those very practices which brought them into existence. Therefore, the "detailed investigation of the process of the construction of meaning" (Welch, 1993: 117) seems to be the key to uncovering what meaning is. However, no social process can be read unequivocally by its various participants. To argue otherwise would be tantamount to abandoning the phenomenological position altogether. And, since the process, phenomenologically speaking, "lives" only in the eyes of the beholder, the outcome(s) of any social interaction will differ in significance, value, and even configuration, depending on particular standpoints of participating agents. To sum it up, no singular meaning can be derived from however "detailed" an investigation of the process, because the process itself unfolds as an infinite multiplicity of individual strategies of action. Despite its claims to empirical validity, phenomenology remains first and foremost an interpretation, that is, by necessity, a subjective account of externally unfolding events, with a researcher attempting to indicate their internal significance for the participants and reconstruct their meaning from either a functionalist or normativist perspective. The same epistemological gap is certainly present in all positivist accounts of political culture as well.

And yet, phenomenology is definitely a superior strategy over purely hermeneutic exegesis. By shifting the focus of attention from the analyst's ideas to the participants' ideas and from the culture as value system onto the culture as a process of social interaction, it achieves a degree of "objectivity" that hermeneutics might not be able to reach. While necessarily relying on some pre-existing knowledge of society's "workings", phenomenology at least sensitizes us to the fact that those "workings" can be supported by patterns of interaction and value structures different from our own. Most importantly, the value structures themselves are interpreted as flexible outcomes of the ongoing interactive practices, rather than rigid, once-and-for-all fixed entities.

Phenomenological applications to the field of Soviet and post-Soviet studies are few. S. Welch defends this approach with the example of Stalinist "cultural revolution" and its

impact on ordinary Soviet people, for whom the artificially constructed culture was quite real, since it provided "a basis for their own continuance and functioning as a social group" (1993: 115). The counter-example of unofficial "shopfloor culture", guided by more pragmatic considerations than the exalted ideology of heroic socialist construction, serves to further illuminate the thesis of the social-practical embeddedness of both. More recently, Michael Urban (1994) published a phenomenologically informed analysis of post-Soviet political discourse, concentrating on essential similarities between the formally opposed "democratic" and "conservative" camps in the postcommunist Russia, and tracing these similarities not only back to their common Soviet past, but also forward - through contemporary patterns of interaction, practically determined mutual stances, peculiarities of social communication, etc. Phenomenological jargon, if not method, can be detected in some publications of former Soviet philosophers dealing with traditional problems of Russian national character (Zviglianich, 1993) or more pressing issues of current postcommunist transformation (Polokhalo, 1995). Beyond that, phenomenological research in Soviet and post-Soviet political culture is still in its infancy.

Meanwhile, the phenomenological project in Russian political culture research indeed begs closer scrutiny. As even leading representatives of the political-sociological mainstream acknowledge,

> We tend to know a good deal more about values and opinions than about other dimensions of the political culture, such as affective attachments and aversions and patterns of background knowledge, information acquisition, and opinion formation. (Remington, 1993: 197)

It is precisely to these "patterns of background knowledge" and routine practices of "information acquisition" that phenomenology alerts scholarly attention. It explains "affective attachments and aversions" as social-practical outcomes of the activities that unfold in the environment which is not "preset" by either existing institutions or widely held values, but rather open to constant reshaping and reinterpretation by participating actors. While behaviourism tends to see values as immutable milestones demarcating society's unique "political culture", phenomenology treats them as dynamic configurations of reciprocal stances and dispositions of the players interacting here and now. Needless to say, it is vulnerable to accusations of relativism and subjectivism. Still, this kind of subjectivism

is certainly preferable to the unreflective subjectivism of a positivist "empirical theorist", who all too often starts with undeclared, hidden assumptions of a general theoretical character, deduces subsequent operationalizations at will, imposes the whole scheme upon "empirical reality", and uses the results already largely preordained by this strategy to justify the whole enterprise post hoc.

Now and then, a particular fallacy committed by an empirical theorist is described as "ethnocentrism", i.e. an uncritical usage of one's own national or ethnic values as a yardstick to judge other cultures and peoples. Putting aside the whole issue of racial and national prejudices, which may consciously or unconsciously constitute a significant part in this bias, the researcher who is open to it completely distorts her view of the culture studied. In political culture studies, the error becomes magnified due to the characteristic nature of the object. Ethnonational values are inseparable from political culture of any national or subnational formation. The statement sounds almost tautological because, first, the notion of political culture in Comparative Politics is traditionally related to the notion of the nation state. The nation state is regarded as a main bearer of political culture. Political culture itself is often interpreted as a political subsystem of the whole national system of culture. Secondly, in anthropology, which has donated the concept to political science, cultures are usually demarcated by boundaries separating one community from another. When several communities are united by a mutually comprehensible language, common traditions and customs, collective consciousness and so on, we say that they share the same ethnicity and define their collective culture in largely ethnic terms. Thirdly, contemporary political culture studies continue currently outmoded tradition of comparative studies of the national character, and, despite all criticism of this ancestry, incorporate some of its core elements in the ongoing research projects. It is hard to avoid discussion of nationality, while handling the problematics of political culture, even if the analysis offered is mostly configurative, restricted to a single nation or a subnational group. There are still more reasons to invoke nationality, if any attempt at comparison is declared.

Surprisingly, political culture studies seldom problematicize nationality, that is, make it a separate, distinct object of analysis (for one of the exceptions see White, 1979: 50-56). It is usually submerged under more inclusive rubrics. Political culture itself conveniently

presents one of those. If, on the other hand, nationality or nationalism are made an explicit object of investigation, political culture is rarely invoked. As a result, studies of political culture and studies of "the national question" intersect at best occasionally, if at all. Sovietology and the modern research in postcommunist transformation provide good illustrations of this predicament.

Soviet Nationality Policies in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies

A. Russia and the Russians

As a matter of fact, different interpretations of Soviet nationality politics in the West started to appear before the birth of Sovietology as a recognized branch of area studies. The first books on the subject were published, unsurprisingly, in the bordering countries, for whom the matter was of immediate concern due to the security considerations. Polish, Czech and Hungarian writers all contributed to the discussion of the "red czarism", as the communist-led dictatorship of proletariat was often described (see Dallin, 1993: 140 n1; Szporluk, 1988: 222; 273). Since continuity had been stressed to such an extent as to prevent any thorough analysis of the Soviet innovations, communist nationality policy was accordingly presented as a simple continuation of the Russian imperialist expansion and subjugation of the conquered peoples. Without much hesitation or any attempt at empirical analysis, Russians were depicted as a "normal" imperial nation dominating ethnic minorities at home and exploiting their colonial subjects in the captured territories. This evaluation was seemingly in line with observations of national and social struggle in the non-Russian periphery, where local communists, often outnumbered by better entrenched formations of the propertied classes, had to rely on the aid of the Moscow-directed Red Army in their bid for national hegemony.

The Russian imperialism thesis was supported by the arrival of the misnamed "national Bolshevism" of Ustrialov and the whole "Smena Vekh" (Change of Signposts) movement (see Szporluk, 1988: 218-19; Ustrialov, 1925). Properly speaking, "smenovekhovstvo", much criticized by the VKP(b) leaders, who had never dropped their suspicions toward the unwelcome "poputchiki" (fellow-travellers), should have been characterized rather as "bolshevized nationalism", not national bolshevism. It was an

ideology of Russian emigré intellectuals, the people of unclear convictions; of those who were usually lost between the right and the left in political struggles they were unable to fully comprehend. These people appealed not so much to the Soviet government as to the fellow emigrants. Its essence was simple: Russian nationalists were encouraged to collaborate with the communists, since the latter were taken to be legitimate promoters of the Russian national (statist) course. Smenovekhovstvo had its logic and reasoned quite rationally in the traditional worldview system of the Russian statists. As long as the territorial integrity of the country was preserved and the strong ruler managed the affairs of the multinational state successfully, the concrete beliefs of the ruler or the political-economic direction of the state did not matter much. After all, in Ustrialov's own words, the revolution could "evolve" (1925: 22), and the "fellow-travellers" could be quite instrumental in securing, "as far as possible, the organic or even mechanic adjustment of the revolution to the national interests of the country" (1925: 30). This kind of reasoning could find its way to Russian monarchists, rightist and leftist authoritarians, imperial bureaucrats and even opportunistic people of formerly liberal convictions. No doubt, there was some sympathetic audience inside the Bolshevik party as well. However, this was not an authentic Bolshevist program, not even a nationalistic deviance inside the party.

The most close approximation to national Bolshevism per se was represented by Stalin and Dzerzhinsky - the people characterized by Lenin as "Russified non-Russians", who "are always on the prodigal side when it is a matter of truly Russian attitudes" (as quoted in Conquest, 1967: 145). Whether Lenin himself was a hidden Russian nationalist, a "Listian", in Szporluk's characterization, or a genuine proletarian internationalist, overcautious in everything that at least remotely smacked of great Russian chauvinism to the point of actual "preventative" discrimination against Russian national interests (R. Sakwa, 1993) remains a question open to further debate. This author subscribes to a view that the very nature of the overcentralized system of communist government allowed any "hidden nationalist" at the apex of political power to reveal his or her secret inclinations in full. There was no point to fight against "autonomization", proposed by Stalin, for full Union membership and respectively upgraded status of several non-Russian nationalities. There was no need to incorporate the "secession clause" in the first Soviet Constitution. If Bolsheviks

had simply taken over the traditional political culture of the Russian imperial elite, there would have been no reason for them to deviate from the unitary model of state whatsoever.

The phenomenon of national Bolshevism was really created by the national-minded leaders of the non-Russian communist parties and some regional branches of the RKP(b) that acted in the ethnic periphery. The Ukrainian Communist Party (borot'bysty) was exemplary in this respect (see Subtelny, 1993: 472-73). Before the principle "socialism in one country" was adopted, Ukrainian national communists had prioritized national liberation over social emancipation, at least chronologically, in terms of task sequencing. By taking this position, they appeared closer to the leftist Ukrainian nationalists than to the Orthodox Marxists of the RKP(b) intellectual core. As the national-minded Ukrainian socialist Volodymyr Vynnychenko observed, both opposing camps in Ukrainian politics of the time had proven to be wrong. While the issue of national and social liberation was, in essence, a double-edged sword, a twofold problem, each part of which was inseparable from the other, nationalists tended to elevate the national over the social to the complete disregard of the latter, and socialists acted diametrically opposite, but also in fundamentally incomplete and curtailed ways (Vynnychenko, 1920: vol. 2, 328).

The Soviet regime was not a hollow shell for Russian nationalist domination. It disregarded Russian national interests no less than the national interests of the other subjects of the Soviet federation. In fact, ethnicity was discriminated against as a principle of social organization, in general, not as someone's particular ethnicity or nationality against someone else's particular ethnicity. The impact of Russian political culture on Soviet nationality politics, if it existed, should be traced in another fashion than the simple assertion of Russian nationalism and imperialism.

The empirical evidence for this claim is not hard to find. By many quantitative measures and all comparative indices of the rate of development, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic fared worse than other Soviet Union republics. As late as the 1980s, its living standards, with the exception of the two "imperial cities" of Moscow and Leningrad, were about the lowest in the whole Union; its education and health care provision were hovering around the median; and the proportion of budget revenues it had been allowed to retain for internal purposes was usually lower than in the other republics (Posen, 1993:

116, 123 n 21-22; Sakwa, 1993: 103-104; Molchanov, 1994: 129-30). By more than one measurement and in several important indices, Russian national resources, including people, were among the most exploited in the whole of the former Soviet Union. We will return to this question later, when looking at the phenomenon of post-Soviet Russian nationalism and the structural factors inherited from the previous regime that prompted its mass inception in the 1990s. Let us now turn to cultural implications and consequences of the absence of any sustained ethnic-based nationalist effort promulgating Russia and Russians on the part of the Soviet communist rulers.

The practice of "weeding out" all the sprouts of Russian nationalism that might have been inherited from the Empire's last years was sponsored by Lenin. However, it was not invented from scratch. It followed directly from ideological premises of Marxist-Leninist communism with its notion that "proletarians do not have a Fatherland." Scholars more sensitive to the ideological nature of the regime have underscored the great emphasis that the Soviet communists put on "socialization" of the national cultures (Conquest, 1967: 62-65). The "socialization" practices involved comprehensive streamlining of the national cultures on the basis of their presumed, ascribed, or newly constructed socialist content. Those national traditions and customs that did not fit the project were excluded from consideration and actively suppressed. The concrete strategies of culture unification encompassed a variety of positive (assimilationist) and negative (disruptive) measures, most notably the rewriting of national histories, the socialist reconstruction of languages, the creation of propagandistic socialist art and literature, indoctrination practices in academia and education, the never ending fight with reappearing occurrences of "bourgeois nationalism" and so on (Conquest, 1967: ch. 4). These measures were part and parcel of the overarching totalitarian project whose essence H. Arendt described as tying atomized individuals together in open-ended movement whose very existence justified its inception, goals proclaimed and means employed. By its internal logic, social and cultural atomization should have preceded ideological manipulation and consolidation of the regime.

Cultural atomization implied that only those elements that were regarded appropriate for both long-term and short-term goals of the party were selectively drawn from the national culture pools. This strategy required silencing of deviant discourses and, where possible,

eliminating all grounds for their subsequent revival. Since deviance could have originated from both contemporary sources and the historical past of the nation, the "cultural revolution" was waged on two fronts: against traditions and the established ways of life - and against innovative intellectuals whose pursuits were considered detrimental to the party course. Russia's own traditionalism fell an early victim to this struggle, and the nascent Russian liberal-oriented intellectualism did not have to wait much longer. Modern nationalism needs both tradition to rely upon and reinterpret to the project's benefit, and the national intellectuals to perform the job. The Soviet state disassembled the first (without reconstituting it in any Russian national form) and essentially destroyed the second. The culture that appeared as a result could not be described as a Russian nationalist (or even national) one: neither in its form (if we believe "form" to be wider than the linguistic shell), nor in its content.

It has been argued more than once that the October 1917 Revolution arrested Russian national development, as well as national development of other Soviet peoples (Anderson, 1991; Szporluk, 1988). The problem of continuity, usually discussed by the political culture theorists, can not be easily resolved with observations of tsarist and communist nationality policies. In both design and implementation, those two were worlds apart. Does it mean that the communist project was basically successful, and the "new Soviet man" had really arrived in place of former Russians, Ukrainians, or Georgians? In other words, can it be concluded that the very depth of the Soviet denationalization practices amounted to such a profound shift in political culture that there can be no meaningful discussion of continuity in either political culture or nationality?

To answer these questions, we need to consider the propositions that, first, the political culture of a nation is not a uniform set of beliefs, principles and values shared by all of the co-nationals, and, second, that political-cultural continuity should not necessarily manifest itself in all segments of the political system or all varieties of political behaviour. The importance of the first proposition might be realized if one admits that what often appears under the rubric of "traditional Russian political culture" has really more to do with the political culture of the Russian traditional elite. The famous concepts of "statism", "authoritarianism", or "patrimonialism" directly refer to the upper levels of social hierarchy

and their worldview. Of course, this is not to say that the patterns of behaviour informed by these principles were completely alien to the population at large. The point, rather, is that the political culture emanating from the top of the political system may or may not penetrate to the depth of the popular body, and its level of acceptance would vary from one stratum to the other. Just as Russian imperialism had been characteristic, perhaps, less of the traditional Russian peasant and more of the imperial bureaucracy, so the "new Soviet man" - the product of the new Soviet political culture - arrived with varying measure of success in the Party and some of the more open-to-indoctrination segments of the population, but proved stillborn in other, less enthusiastic sectors of the society. Since Russians lagged behind other nationalities (say, Ukrainians) in the degree of national development achieved before the revolution, they were intrinsically more open to denationalization policies than the others. However, even the Russian embrace of cosmopolitan communist ideology had been, at best, circumstantial and fell well short of the desired cultural homogenization.

The second proposition should alert us to the possibility that political-cultural continuity may or may not precondition any particular succession in the field of nationality policies. Of course, this weakens the explanatory power of political culture as a fully independent variable in the studies of nationalism and nationality. I believe, however, that the same is true with respect to any set of the proposed variables, especially those used in the studies of governance and public policy, but also those pertaining to a much larger field of activities associated with development and maintenance of the political system in general. None of the regularly operationalized social science variables can pretend to absolute explanatory power; consequently none of them can be regarded fully independent, even for purely analytical purposes. Counterposition of factors is too common a feature in social life to be easily disassembled in simple causation schemes.

Of course, this does not mean that political culture should be disposed of in nationality studies. Its influence, however, has to be assessed on much subtler premises, while shying away from the desire to draw direct parallels between the national policies of the past and those of the present government. On deeper scrutiny, tsarist Russia did not have any nationality policy at all, if policy is understood as a strategically-planned, consciously-designed and carried-through set of measures encompassing everything or near everything

pertaining to the issue-area in question. Nevertheless, several chaotic attempts to Russianize the subdominant non-Russian population - the closest approximation to something like the "national policy" of the regime - were indeed undertaken by the imperial bureaucracy in the last decades of the 19th century. No policy pertaining to the national development of the Russians themselves was ever devised in St. Petersburg's "corridors of power", and the Moscow tsardom before Peter the Great definitely lacked the concept of nation itself. The thrust on "Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality", initiated by the then - Minister of Education Count S.S. Uvarov in the mid-19th century, had little to do with nationalism per se, rather more with a belated attempt to reinvigorate a medieval sense of unity between the monarch and the people, prompted by the Eastern Christianity tradition of close association between spiritual and worldly powers. From this point of view, the USSR indeed could have been considered "the legatee of the prenational dynastic states" rather than the "precursor of a twenty-first century internationalist order" (B. Anderson, as quoted in Szporluk, 1988: 233).

This point should be remembered to avoid a not-uncommon confusion between nationalism and traditionalism. That nationalism is a product of modernization became a kind of academic staple since the works of B. Anderson, E. Gellner, E. J. Hobsbawm, M. Hroch, and A. Smith were published. That Russia has not experienced a normal, full-blown modernization until now is also a quite comprehensible, though not as oft-cited, thesis.[1] The natural conclusion would be that Russia did not have and could not have a nationalism of its own until very recently. Therefore, I cannot agree with the authors who first cite Gorbachev's perestroika policies and the national nomenklatura reaction to his mistakes as "manifestations of modernization and nationalism" and immediately thereafter proceed to state that the "policy of greater openness and public discussion had unleashed longstanding feelings of extreme Russian nationalism, anti-Semitism, and interethnic hatred" (Mayer et al, 1996: 292). There is some clear contradiction in terms here. If nationalism was created as a result of Gorbachev's "modernization", it obviously could not be "longstanding", and there was nothing to "unleash" before the new political course brought its fruit. If, on the contrary, "the extreme Russian nationalism" was kept under the lid by the oppressive policies of the former

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[1]R. Sakwa (1993) speaks about "mismodernization."

Soviet regime, the Russian "modernization" should have had occurred already, perhaps, before that regime came into existence.

Another option could be, however, that both alternatives are false. Russia could have entered the final stage of its political and economic modernization not earlier than the "shock therapy" policies were implemented under the Gaidar-Yeltsin government. This final stage requires not only existence of the market and market mentality among the population, but such a degree of penetration by the market forces into the texture of society that was hardly possible even in the last years of the Romanov Empire. It is only on this stage that fully secular, post-traditionalist nationalism may arise. When Marxists labelled nationalism "bourgeois", they captured a real historical connection between the rise of the modern middle classes and the development of nationalism as, first, ideology and politics, and, second, mass attitudes and behaviour. As a product of economic competition, new, genuine Russian nationalism (as distinct from premodern xenophobia and "interethnic hatred") emerges right before our eyes. To become "longstanding", it will have to endure structural tensions of the world, regional, and local markets for quite some time. To make it "extreme", the realization of the unbearable character of those tensions should mature among, first and foremost, capitalist classes, who will then transfer this understanding further down to the less advantaged strata of the population.

Still, political culture continuity in Russian national development does exist: as a negative, rather than positively identified, phenomenon. Tsarist imperial supranationalism had been followed by communist denationalization practices, and in both cases the success of the policy was premised on the absence of a clearly defined Russian national identity. Russian national consciousness had no chance to develop under Empire, because it would have meant separation of the national "core" from the alien "periphery", and the tsars were eager to prevent it. National consciousness of the Russians was further thwarted by the Soviet socialist cosmopolitanism. Both regimes tried to define the "people" in territorial, rather than ethnic terms. In both cases, the state was put before and above the nation - a pattern obviously dissimilar to that of the Western Europe:

> Thus, the Russians never developed a national identity, except as the dominant part of a greater Russian empire. Unlike the peoples of Europe (and the "near abroad"), where national consciousness based on ethnic identity,

> has become the norm, the "national consciousness" of the Russians, even in modern times, has been based first and foremost on territory and the state - in short, the empire. (Theen and Wilson, 1996: 293).

Nationality was simply not a point of reference for those people who, according to M. Hroch, stood at the beginning of any national movement - creative intellectuals. Even the famous Slavophiles versus Westernizers debate of the 19th century was not couched in national terms. Neither were its distant reminiscences of the early post-perestroika period (see Pechatnov, 1994).

This may seem counterintuitive. However, when R. Szporluk says that "it is proper to view the great intellectual and political controversies of the first half of the nineteenth century -the Westernizer-Slavophile controversy - as a debate over the definition of the Russian nation" (1986: 158), he contradicts his own (1988) assumptions on the nature and origins of modern nationalism. Presenting Slavophiles as nationalists, and the Westernizers as liberals, is misleading in both directions. While it is true that the original Slavophiles sought their inspiration in wrongly or rightly understood ancient Rus' habits and did not care much about other Slavs abroad, their conception of nationality was a world apart from its contemporary, European nationalism. It had even less in common with the official position of the Russian government (Petrovich, 1956: 51-54). The premodern thrust of Slavophilism was thrown into a sharp relief by the Panslavism it engendered. The pan-Slavic movement was precisely an opposite to modernizing ventures of its contemporaries - nationalist movements in Poland, Czech or Slovak parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Serbia, Croatia, or Bulgaria. While all of the latter sought to disentangle a unique nationality they wanted to represent, in many cases raising it out of the premodern ethnic entities, from all-inclusive imperial, regional or supranational families, the pan-Slavic ideologues tried to submerge ethnic and national differences under the all-encompassing idea of "Slavic unity". "There is no such thing as a Slavic race, but this did not prevent Pan-Slavs from calling for 'racial emancipation'" (L. Snyder, 1984: 7). Somewhat later, the idea of all Slavs' unity had been narrowed down to the "Eastern Slavs' unity" and proved equally damaging to the nascent Ukrainian nationalism, at least according to those leaders of the movement who devoted considerable time and effort fighting the so-called "Russophilia" in its own ranks. "Pan" aspirations were and remain, perhaps, the most potent barrier preventing development

of Russia's own non-imperial nationalism, that is, an ideology and a worldview possessing tools and means necessary to separate the Great Russian nationality and/or the Russian Federation citizenry from other Eastern Slav nation-states and the Russian diaspora in the "near abroad". What L. Snyder considers a form of "macro-nationalism" may, in fact, be something quite opposite to the modern Russian nationalism per se.

The Westernizers were not concerned with the Russian nation as a separate entity, but rather with Russians as Europeans or candidates for "Europeanism." They were more or less cosmopolitans, and honestly proud of that. This observation, which may sound a bit exaggerated with respect to the 19th-century originators of the term, seems unequivocally accurate, when applied to the current "liberal democrats" of the post-Soviet variety. Whether the economic, foreign, or cultural policies they promulgate are taken into consideration, it is equally hard to find any sound, sustained evidence of understanding of the Russian national interests as separate, or even contradicting in some points, to the interests of the Western European states, the USA, or the transnational corporations increasingly swaying the country. For contemporary Russian liberals/neoconservatives, there simply cannot be any tension between the direction world markets take in their development and Russia's own peculiar position in these markets. If the tension is too obvious to ignore, it is usually interpreted as a corporate, sectoral, or administrative problem, rather than that which pertains to the Russian people as a whole. "Liberal democracy" in Russia remains inescapably elitist, and the inherent elitism foils its growth and transformation into a national force. For the same reason, it is incapable of presenting any program of national development addressed to all segments of the population, as the results of the 1995 Duma and the 1996 presidential elections conclusively show.

In defense of the Russian liberals, it must be stressed that, by all accounts, the time when clear-cut ideological platforms enjoyed success with the electorate has gone for good - in Russia just as elsewhere. Even the presumably much more powerful idea of the "Eastern Slavs' unity," utilized by the neo-communists and the nationalists, did not bring the unconditional electoral victory. The appeal of "Western liberal democracy," employed by smaller parties of the intellectuals, supported by the Russian "new rich," fared substantially worse.

B. Ukraine and the Ukrainians

If Russia still struggles with its past, trying to redefine its national identity and develop the corresponding set of policies, what can be said of Ukraine? For many Soviet studies specialists of the previous generation, Ukraine remained but a shadow of Russia, whether before or after the October revolution. The Ukrainian diaspora in the West, which argued the different view, was effectively marginalized in the mainstream academic community. The overall consensus was that, even if Ukraine was important, its importance should have been assessed primarily vis-à-vis Russian hegemony and Russian plans for further expanding the Soviet sphere of influence in the world. One of the most insightful works on Soviet nationality politics in the 1960s still described the role of the Ukrainians as the "younger brothers" of the Russians and, at best, junior partners in governance (Armstrong, 1968). While this assessment was largely confirmed by the empirical evidence of the Ukrainian participation in the all-Union apparatuses of power and the role Ukrainians played in the other non-Russian republics of the USSR, it nevertheless downplayed the potential for independent action Ukrainians so convincingly revealed in 1989-91 and the following years.

Ukraine's problems with Russia since the 17th century, as well as its earlier and subsequently less visible problems with Poland, are well documented (see, e. g., Peoples, Nations, Identities, 1996; Potichnyi et al., 1992). Even in the most sympathetic accounts of Ukrainian history, Ukrainians are usually introduced "as history's victims, as underdogs" (Szporluk, 1986: 161). The prolonged absence of one's own national state is regularly cited as a major evidence to that end. However, the "stateness" or the "statelessness" of an ethnic group is but one indicator of its potential strength and well-being, as compared to other ethnic groups and nationalities. That cultural survival can be accomplished without the state, even in frequently adverse environments, has been witnessed by several ethnic groups and nationalities. That social success does not necessarily require one's "own" designated territorial-administrative enclave has been demonstrated more than once by ethnic diasporas in North America, Australia and elsewhere. For more historically distant examples, one may think of the Chinese seashore traders in the Indian Ocean area, or Jewish merchants in medieval Europe.

Ukraine's "victimization" was of a peculiar kind. Though denied their national state for several centuries, Ukrainian aristocracy actively participated in medieval Lithuanian and Polish-Lithuanian states of the 14-15 centuries, and Ukrainian clergy - in building of the Russian Empire since the 1700s (Subtelny, 1993: 99-101, 249-50). Ukrainians, as no one else, were intimately connected with the structures of power in Moscow tsardom, Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Historically, the Ukrainian aristocratic families - Razumovskie, Vyshnevetskie, Skoropadskie, Glinki and others -- were highly visible in the upper echelons of Russian nobility. Ukrainian Orthodox monasteries remained strongholds of the Orthodox faith and raised a number of church leaders and ideologues for the whole Russia. Ukraine had its own capitalists of indigenous ethnic origin: Rodzyanki, Tereshchenki, Symyrenki being the most prominent. Finally, communists never lacked Ukrainian representatives in the Party's apex: not only in Ukraine proper, but in Moscow centre and the other parts of the Soviet Union as well. Ukrainians constituted the weighty proportion of the Red Army brass; a KGB career starting in Ukraine and ending in Moscow was not exceptional either.

Yet, more important, perhaps, is another point. Even if all of the Ukrainian grievances could indeed be interpreted solely in terms of the national oppression and subjugation, and I strongly doubt the validity of such a claim, Ukrainians, just as other until recently stateless nations, "have no monopoly on trauma", since they are obviously "not the only ones whose ambitions were thwarted and to whom history has dealt a raw deal or two" (Ajami, 1987: 107). The historical trauma itself is a phenomenon complex enough to eschew any simplistic reading that sees the national liberation fight in disjuncture from other social forces at play: class struggles within a seemingly "homogeneous" nation, or the respective levels of political, cultural, and economic development achieved by the contending actors.

Broadly speaking, Soviet and post-Soviet studies offered seven distinct explanations of the Soviet nationality policies. Each of them presents the Ukrainian nationalist movement in a different light. We will consider them in turn, trying to trace connections from a general picture to more detailed view of Ukraine and Ukrainians.

1. The earliest account, as noted, was grounded on the assumption of continuity between the Great Russian chauvinism of the tsarist Empire and the new Russian nationalism

of Soviet governmental practices. Some scholars also wrote of "Soviet Russian nationalism" (Barghoorn, 1956) whose main purpose was not dissimilar to that of its imperial predecessor: to Russianize smaller nationalities of the Soviet Union for the benefit of the Moscow centre (see also Kohn, 1933). The view of Ukrainians as underdogs conforms to this model.

2. The "younger brothers" explanation is rooted in the functionalist paradigm offered by modernization theorists. According to this view, Soviet industrialization and urbanization efforts, as well as an efficiently run bureaucratic machine of governance and indoctrination, yielded their fruit: nationalist resistance in Ukraine diminished, to be substituted by jockeying for governmental positions, statuses and privileges in the Ukrainian Soviet elite, and the new paths of social mobility, based on unspoken "social contract", in the population at large. Alex Inkeles and Raymond Bauer were among the first theorists to apply the modernization model to the Soviet realities, and Ukraine in particular. Karl Deutsch's theory of social mobilization as leading to eventual ethnic assimilation, though not specifically concerned with the fate of Ukraine, has also influenced a number of specialists in Soviet nationality politics. As Mark R. Beissinger noted, "Armstrong's reliance on Deutsch may well have caused him to overestimate the potential for assimilation among Ukrainians" (1993: 343). However, John Armstrong himself, in a recent article, though admitting several methodological flaws of his earlier model, based upon "a combination of structural functionalism and the single rational actor approach", quite firmly stands by the category of "younger brothers", which "implied that (apart from completely alienated West Ukrainians) East Slav relations resemble a family quarrel, in which bitter reactions to regime mistreatment alternate with reconciliation to the Russians" (Armstrong, 1993: 332, 336). Those who may subscribe to the view are prompted to evaluate "most recent trends" that "appear to bear out this diagnosis" (Armstrong, 1993: 336). Though the article was originally published in 1990, the events that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, the patterns of domestic nationality policies in both Russia and Ukraine, and the evaluation of the ethnic composition of contemporary elites in both countries may indeed corroborate Armstrong's conclusion, especially when assessed against the backdrop of the Russian-Chechen hostilities in 1994-96, or the Russian military involvement in Tajikistan, Abkhazia, and Moldova (Transdniester Republic) under the flag of "peacekeeping operations."

3. Some of the off-shoots of the totalitarian model, especially those that owe more to H. Arendt than to Z. Brzezinski and C. Friedrich, engendered the ideological explanation of Soviet nationality policies. We have seen its influence in Conquest's view on forced "socialization" of the Soviet constituent national cultures, Russian included. This position assumed the inherent hostility between communism and nationalism as primarily ideologies competing for unrestricted and unreserved human loyalty. Ideological conformity, as Arendt noted, was absolutely crucial for the very existence of totalitarian regimes. Nationalism and communism are mortal enemies, since "all modern political theories which lead to totalitarianism present an immersion of an absolute principle into reality in the from of a historical movement; and it is this absoluteness, which they pretend to embody, which gives them their `right' of priority over the individual conscience" (Arendt, 1994: 209). If this is so, the plight of the Ukrainians in the former Soviet empire is neither unique nor much different from that of Russians: both had to sacrifice their national allegiances to the anonymous cause of "international proletarian solidarity", or the dynamics of one-dimensional ideological movement which could not tolerate any deviation on any objective social or subjective cultural and psychological grounds. In E. Gellner's words, "a genuine, full-blooded socialism must also be an absolutist ideocracy" (1994: 175). The national communism in both Russia and Ukraine, as a particularly troublesome hybrid of two ideologies with competing claims and incompatible validation bases, had to be weeded out in the first place:

> From the Communist point of view, such ideas were dangerous enough in themselves; while Communism could tolerate for a time basically antipathetic forms, it could not allow its own forms to be used as a cover for developing and independent ideology. (Armstrong, 1990: 10).

More flexible versions of the thesis whereby Soviet nationality politics is best explained by its ideological nature work with more flexible concept of the Soviet ideology itself. A useful point of departure is the distinction between the officially declared and practically operational ideology, or, as W. T. Bluhm has put it, between "forensic" and "latent" ideology (1974: 10). This distinction allows us not to confuse words and deeds, or, on the other plane of observation, behaviour and institutions. The application to the Soviet nationality problems is that "the pragmatism of power, which has characterized the use of

ideology in all other areas of Russian political culture, also dominates the manipulation of the concepts of nationalism by the Communist leadership" (Bluhm, 1974: 334). As contemporary Ukrainian nationalism goes, this expectation is best suited to make sense out of sudden transformation of the Ukrainian Communist party elite into fervent nationalists in 1991-93, when political expediency rendered ideological "adjustment" inevitable (see Motyl, 1993: ch. 6).

4. The fourth approach to the study of nationalism in Sovietological literature conflates nationalism and religion. Even if the premise of the distinct character of these phenomena is preserved, the claim "to an interdependence and, at times, to a symbiosis of religious and national ideas" (Markus, 1984: 59) is not uncommon. Whether we agree with that or not, any student of nationalism would, perhaps, admit with Eugene Kamenka that "religion and nationalism are a frightening mixture indeed, though in religion as in nationalism one has to be backward-looking to be really terrifying" (1994: 140). Well, it is a distinguishing feature of political-cultural research by definition to be at least somewhat "backward-looking", meaning, of course, not the reactionary political agenda, but a methodological inclination to explain things present by things past. The religious-cultural explanations of national differences in politics, domestic institutional arrangements and value structures held by the populations in question also subscribe to this general strategy, since they also project past cultural developments (the acceptance of a particular set of religious beliefs) to the present situation at large (see Huntington, 1993). A representative example of this particular brand of theorizing is Vasyl Markus's article "Religion and Nationalism in Ukraine". After presenting some evidence on history and the present state of religious developments in Ukraine, the author comes to the conclusion that, basically, the whole of Ukrainian polity and society can be analyzed in terms of "several models of underlying spiritual-ideological values, the type of organization based on them, and, finally, certain political concepts resulting therefrom" (1984: 79). The famous dissidents of the Soviet era, the Uniate and the Orthodox Autocephalous "Ukrainian national churches"

> ... represent a single pattern: religiosity is treated as the 'national character' of Ukrainians; and a separate, indigenous Ukrainian cultural development, as opposed to the Russian one, is stressed. Here national culture has been inspired by religion for over one thousand years and therefore a symbiosis of

> religion and nationality is taken for granted. <...> Religion, in principle, tends to identify with ethnic nationalism, in this model. Politically the first model expresses itself in the quest for national statehood. (Markus, 1984: 79)

Apart from anachronistic statements on a "thousand years-old" Ukrainian national culture, presumably referring to the culture of Kievan Rus and ancient Slavic tribes, the notion that religion should be considered a leading force in the Ukrainian national awakening may be doubted, if one remembers that the oldest and numerically most powerful church in Ukraine throughout its history has been the Russian Orthodox Church, whose sympathies definitely extended in the direction quite opposite to the one followed by the Ukrainian separatist movement. To solve the apparent contradiction, the author claims that the Russian Church also "became nationalist - not in a narrow ethnic sense, but in a pan-Russian and pan-Slavic sense, integrating many ethnic elements in the process of their gradual Russification" (Markus, 1984: 80). But, were it the case, why did not it have overwhelming success in the land it originated from - Ukraine? Or, to sharpen the point, why should its values and political concepts it presumably promoted (the author mentions "Soviet-Russian nationalism", "Unity of historical Russia" and "Autocracy") be alien to the Ukrainians, whose membership in the Russian Orthodox Church substantially outnumbered both "national churches" combined?

If anything, these questions cannot be satisfactorily answered in the conceptual framework where religion moulds not only national feelings, but the whole societal infrastructure from the top to the bottom. The approach proves problematic when we finally turn to a "Soviet secular antireligion", to find out that "within the definite historical context, the Soviet model replaced initial Marxist rootless internationalism with Russian culture, the historical and geopolitical heritage of imperial Russia, as a more tangible mobilizational value to shape a new man and society" (Markus, 1984: 80). But why did this happen? And why had the regime not simply proclaimed Russian Orthodoxy its official religion, which would be only logical to do in terms of the "historical heritage of imperial Russia"? If spiritual values are paramount in shaping all aspects of life in society, and if the unquestionable difference between Orthodox and communist "underlying values" is noted (Markus, 1984: 81, table 4.1), how could they "tend to converge" (Markus, 1984: 80)? Apart from vague mention of "partly practical, partly ideological" reasons, Markus does not

address any of these matters. How religion, which used to be common to both Russians and Ukrainians for centuries, was transformed into the instrument of Russian dominance is left out of the picture.

5. The fifth model of Soviet nationalities politics is apparently influenced by rational choice theorizing. It is a relatively new development, despite the fact that, as noted above, different versions of the "rational actor" methodological strategy had been applied to the Soviet context as early as the 1960s. The attempts to pluralize the single rational actor approach prompted application of organizational process and bureaucratic politics models, first in the field of foreign policy and decision making (Allison, 1971). However, the realm of nationality studies remained dominated by the single actor paradigm, usually revealed as a Russia-centred position of an observer. Paradoxically, even in the studies of "suppressed" non-Russian nationalities, the mono-focus persisted: either positively, as the focus on the subdominant group in question, or negatively, in tracing a single link of dominance-subjugation from Moscow to the periphery being studied. Needless to say, this methodology, which prevailed for several decades, made comparative research in Soviet nationality politics hardly possible. If the comparisons were nevertheless drawn, the bases for distinction between the units compared had been generally established from a single viewpoint of the "centre", in terms of its politics, goals and intentions. In other words, they were often exogenous to the national actors themselves, especially the non-Russian national actors. Rationality was still confined within the limits of the single actor paradigm.

The situation had to be changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The plurality of the republican "rational actors", competing on the political scene of the former "empire", became too obvious to tolerate continuing attempts at its rounding with a singular common denominator. As a result, new conceptualizations emerged, exemplified in several works by Ian Bremmer (e.g. Bremmer, 1993). Bremmer himself quotes the now-famous Szporluk distinction between the "empire savers" and the "nation builders" in Russia (Szporluk, 1989) as a source of his inspiration. It may be added that typologies of post-Soviet Russian nationalism were refined and elaborated upon by Richard Sakwa, who insisted on the opposition between "nationalists" and "patriots" (1993: 96-109), and Francis Fukuyama (1994), who separated neo-Stalinists from national communists. However, all these

classifications, save Bremmer's own, have been aimed exclusively at Russians. Their purpose was to define various ethnopolitical groups inside the Russian nation, using the group-preferred interpretation of the Russian national identity as a taxonomic criterion. Bremmer's effort constitutes an enterprise of a different sort precisely because he included other post-Soviet nations as well, and interpreted Soviet and post-Soviet nationality politics as resulting from complex and variously stratified interaction among them. In the process, the single rational actor model yielded to a picture broad enough to accommodate multiple rational actors, each bringing its own strategy of ethnopolitical games along. The environment of their interaction and competition was described not unlike environments more familiar to the academic community: complex organizations competing for scarce resources and perspectives for development. The picture was apparently influenced also by the concept of "cooperation under anarchy", much debated by international relations theorists (cf. Bull, 1995; Grieco, 1990; Keohane, 1984).

Bremmer distinguished between "the center", the "first-order titular nationalities", the "second-order titular nationalities", and the "non-titular" nationalities (1993: 12-17). Each of these actors behaved rationally, in pursuit of self-interest, seeking to maximize the utility it expected from interaction with others. The notion of the "center, as opposed to the state" (Bremmer, 1993: 12) appropriately drew attention to the fact of incongruence between Russian national interests and the interests of the Moscow elite, governing in the name of the Union. Thus, the supranational, or anational Moscow "center" was counterposed to the national actors of both titular and non-titular statures. Secondly, the distinction between the "first-order" and the "second-order" titular nationalities, based upon the administrative-territorial division of the former Soviet Union, helped to explain not only its peculiar "order" of dissolution (in fifteen states, exactly corresponding to the full-status Union republics), but also specificities in separatist/irrendentist claims advanced by the successor states with respect to each other, and the situations when smaller local nationalist elites sought the protection of the former "imperial" center from the encroachments of a bigger nationalism of this or that "first-rank titular" nationality.

6. The next model of nationality politics in the USSR and the post-Soviet area is based on the use of social-economic and political-organizational factors as independent

variables. We may label it realist, social-determinist, or political-sociological. Just as the previous one, by its very logic it denies oversimplified explanations in terms of "Russian imperialism", "Great Russian chauvinism", or the inherent oppressive tendencies of the all-penetrating Russian Orthodox tradition. The gist of the argument is secular and relational. It may not bode well for the political culture paradigm, if we take it as implying strict essential continuity between regimes and epochs. As Mary McAuley, whom I believe to be one of the prominent advocates of the realist standpoint, comments, "those who search for the roots of the ethnic attitudes of Russians in the culture of the Muscovite court ... are looking under the wrong stone. These are modern attitudes, whose mature development has a pre-requisite in the popular assimilation and refinement of the drawing-room notion of narod ..." (McAuley, 1992: 60 n 21). However, this does not mean that political culture studies in general, as something apparently prone to "idealism," are incompatible with the realist standpoint. If a researcher pays attention to socioeconomic factors and objective historical conditions that mould group consciousness and behaviour, she may conceptualize both political culture and national identity as historically determined, transient, relational, but nevertheless very real forces shaping the context of social interaction at a given moment in time.

McAuley's article on nationalism in the Soviet state, as well as her earlier (1984) brilliant critique of the traditional political-culturalist assumptions of Russian "autocracy and despotism," sufficiently illustrate the model. In seeming agreement with modernization theorists, McAuley also sees economic growth and its "spillover" effects as the principal explanatory variables, be it in political culture or nationality studies. However, she would not ascribe unconditionally positive - or indeed any once-and-for-all - established value to the processes of economic integration and development, spread of modern technology, urbanization and so on. She would not agree to the Deutschean claim that social mobilization launches a necessarily assimilationist drive. The concrete outcome of the process is always conditioned by the local situation, history of previous development, etc. As W. Connor notes, "the accompaniments of economic development - increased social mobilization and communication - appear to have increased ethnic tensions and to be conducive to separatist demands" (1994: 39). Indeed, the most mobilized of the former Soviet nations proved to be

also most restive in the ethnopolitical arena. In many cases, contrary to Deutsch's argument, post-Soviet nationalism has been essentially created by presumably assimilationist Soviet policies. Though connected to economic development, it did not follow its progress in a way envisioned by either modernization theorists or Soviet Marxists.

On the other hand, in contradiction to the traditional assumptions of political-cultural continuity, the realist view sees nothing inevitable in either Ukrainian or Russian nationalism. Both are the products of sometimes self-conscious, sometimes not so reflective human activities, more often prompted by the immediate or short-term utility considerations than any pan-historic motives. The forces of modernization affect various segments of the population in different ways, changing social alignments respectively and forcing new kinds of competition on groups that enjoyed a relatively safe existence before. Hence, nationalist feelings among Ukrainians may arise, depending on "where the job opportunities are, against whom they are competing, and whether Russian-Ukrainian divisions coincide with jobs, opportunities and benefits" (McAuley, 1992: 51). The citation sounds almost historical-materialist, and certainly there are many points of intersection between McAuley's political-sociological approach, which tries to balance economic, social, political, institutional and cultural factors, and contemporary versions of historical-materialist multicausality, that also eschew the crude determinism of single-factor explanations.

7. Post-Soviet developments launched the debate on nationalism in the area into the orbit of international politics. Unsurprisingly, several international relations theorists approached the issue from a particular standpoint of their discipline. If we try to omit unquestionably important methodological distinctions among them to emphasize commonality of the position, it appears delineated by common stress on security. Local nationalism, according to this view, is quite recent, in fact, mostly post-Soviet phenomenon. It "results from a gap between a group's inadequate capacity for collective action and acute threats to the group's military or economic security" (J. Snyder, 1993: 86). The gap itself opened up with the collapse of the former superpower, which, for all its ills, had been able at least to maintain control over its territory and the people. The break-up of the USSR left many newly independent states without viable institutions of governance, and the others in a situation of institutional flux. With the state critically weakened, potential and real threats

to the community dictate that some other force of social cohesion should take the state's place. In the absence of the mature civil society, ethnocultural nationalism emerges as the only contender for the role.

Interestingly, the security explanation of the emergence and activation of nationalism in the post-Soviet space may lead to quite reassuring conclusions on Russian-Ukrainian relations. As B. Posen notes, "the security situation between the two republics is favourable from a stability standpoint" (1993: 116). Among the factors assessed to prove this diagnosis are: the patterns of the Russian diaspora settlement; military capabilities of both states; the nuclear presence throughout the area; and relatively benign "histories of each other, as well as their past relations" (Posen, 1993: 115). With the last remark, the IR thesis actually falls back on the turf of Comparative Politics. If history is important, we need to understand what made it "benign" in the first instance. Domestic developments, once again, prove decisive in any analysis of the Ukrainian-Russian nexus, be it today or before.

Conclusion

As the preceding review has shown, different conceptualizations of Soviet and post-Soviet nationality politics are in their own turn grounded in different theoretical frameworks of a broader range, which is reflected in underlying sweeping claims as to the nature of former Soviet and even any communist society whatsoever. The totalitarian school and its offshoot - the ideological approach - is but one example of a paradigm that is still alive and well, despite all attempts to bury it since the mid-1960s. We have seen its influence in both "nationalism versus communism" and "religion and nationalism" types of studies in Soviet nationality politics. Pluralist and behaviourist models returned a picture of collaborating and competing ethnonational actors who learn to use the resources of the paramount state for their individual benefit. Armstrong's view of the Soviet ethnic scene belongs to this tradition. The idealist hypotheses of ahistoric political-cultural continuity resurface under the umbrella of nationality studies each time people draw parallels between Russian tsarism and Russian communism, or, in a current fashion, between the essence of the Soviet Russian hegemony and the bases for Russian dominance in the CIS. Rational choice theorizing largely facilitated discussions of the Soviet "nationality contract" (Bremmer, 1993: 10, 19), not dissimilar to

the Western-type "social contract" between the government, the business, and the labour. According to this framework, each ethnopolitical agent in the former Soviet area sought to renegotiate the terms of the implied quasi-contractual agreement to maximize the expected utility for itself. The result, as numerous public choice theorists so convincingly demonstrated on the material of Western bureaucracies, appeared to be detrimental to everyone. Historical materialism, after shedding some of its former epistemological rigidity, has engendered the whole family of sociologically realist approaches. McAuley's sober assessment of the Soviet nationality politics definitely owes much to this tradition. Finally, the international relations theories with their stress on security and stability may have something important to say about the present-day situation in the post-Soviet states sharing not only common history, but the same border and virtually the same security concerns. However, a closer look at the "international dimension" of the problem reveals its essentially domestic roots and turns us back to the shared history. Historical allusions play a major part in my own modelling of the processes that shape national identity in the post-Soviet society. These processes and their historical referents will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 4. POLITICAL CULTURE AND NATIONALITY IN RUSSIA: BEFORE AND AFTER COMMUNISM

Most of those who write on Russian political culture single out an authoritarian style of governance as the Russian tradition of almost perennial longitude and significance. It may be true that authoritarian rule importantly characterized various periods of Russian history and exerted no small influence on political culture. However, in this instance we have to posit a question regarding specificities of the Russian brand of authoritarianism and situate it in a concrete historical context. There were also manifestations of an alternative political culture. We have to account for them and explain periodical "openings" toward more participatory and even more liberal types of politics. The authoritarian thesis cannot be left as it is, without critical assessment and further elaboration.

The phenomenon of Russian authoritarianism must be looked upon from not only a historical, or political-sociological, but also purely comparative perspective. With this shift of focus, it becomes much less of a nationally specific feature. Supposedly authoritarianism is the main characteristic of the Russian political culture; then what label will identify the Chinese, or the Saudi Arabian, or the Korean? What tradition will be held responsible for the emergence of bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes in the twentieth-century Latin America, or Spain, or Portugal, or Greece? How to fit both Italian Fascism and German Nazism into a smooth progression of democratic institutions and free associations, traced by several distinguished theorists from the early Medieval Ages up to the present (e.g., Putnam, 1993)? Authoritarian manifestations around the globe are many, which means that we cannot distinguish one nation from the others by simply labeling it as "authoritarian."

However, the attempts to fully exhaust the theme of the Russian political culture with an "authoritarian" story of some kind never cease to appear in print. The story usually starts with the Tatar-Mongol domination, linking it to Ivan the Terrible and the early Muscovite tsardom, then goes further to include the Russian Empire and the "totalitarian" Soviet Union. The advocates of the authoritarian thesis never fail to spot the same pattern of "despotism and servility to both czar and commissar" (Erlanger, 1993). Very few theorists ever attempt to question either the comprehensiveness or comparative value of this historical pursuit. After all, neither protracted foreign domination nor serfdom nor absolute monarchy can be claimed as something unique to Russian history. Poland immediately comes to mind. Other

countries in Europe and Asia had the same problems and experienced similar periods in their development. Still, no one looks for the evidence of feudal disunity in medieval Germany to explain, say, contemporary problems in German federal system. Why bother, then, to invoke political-cultural explanations in the case of Russia (the point already made by Mary McAuley, 1984)?

My defence of political-cultural explanations would lie in strengthening their comparative potential, not denying it outright (Welch, 1993) or diluting it beyond all comprehension through the attachment of the "authoritarian" label to Russia, "democratic" - to Great Britain and the USA, and, for example, "corporatist" - to the Low Countries. Just as authoritarianism, and, before that, autocracy, was a rather common feature of many political regimes around the globe, democracy exists in too many forms to be narrowed down to a single Anglo-American tradition. The point, then, is to distinguish various strands in the variety of political forms, all of which may be characterized as democratic, or authoritarian, or corporatist. A straightforward association of "authoritarianism" with Russia, or, as was the case earlier, of "totalitarianism" - with the Soviet Union, does not improve our understanding of those political regimes that may have some easily identifiable properties in common, simultaneously differing in many other aspects, including the scope, the scale, and the concrete manifestations of the traits they share.

Russian political culture has never conformed to any singular tradition, be it authoritarian or democratic, statist or anarchist. An ambiguous and more than fairly contradictory character very likely constitutes one of its systemic and historically persistent features. While its "authoritarian" core was addressed so often that the thesis itself became a cliche, democratic and libertarian elements in the Russian political culture were habitually ignored. Several corrections to this typical unidimensional assessment appeared in the late perestroika period and the first post-Soviet years, when hopes for imminent democratization in Russia were running high (see Hahn, 1993; Petro, 1995). Once again, however, an attempt was made to assign some unambiguous, logically and systemically consistent quality to what should have been properly seen as an inherently conflicting constellation of values. This time, political culture in Russia was streamlined along the positive axis of its closeness to the Western liberal-democratic tradition, rather than the more familiar negative axis of

"Asiatic despotism" and brutality. Thus, while Hahn suggested a certain proximity of Russian political culture to "what we find in Western industrial democracies" (1993: 318), Petro unequivocally contemplated Russia "as an integral and necessary part of the West" (1995: 181). Though more favourable to Russian prospects for democratic development, this conclusion has not deviated from the earlier established line of reasoning in its view of political culture as a definitive, or predominant property of the nation. True, Petro's notion of the "alternative" political culture provided much needed space to accommodate diverging values and traditions. Political culture thus presented resembled more of a medley of various "ways of life" than any one singular, monochrome quality, presumably shared by all co-nationals. However, it was not enough to say that. With the "alternative" political culture conspicuously coming to the fore, it had every chance to be taken as a newly predominant paradigm, as until recently hidden, but now unquestionably revealed as the "true" quality of national life, that is, as something as definitive as its "authoritarian" counterpart in the quite recent past. In Petro's presentation, political culture in Russia was bifurcated, but both its opposing sides were rather uncontroversial.

I intend to argue that the main problem with Russian political culture is not even the fact that it embraces more than one national tradition. The problem is, each and every national tradition of any lasting significance is inherently contradictory. No unequivocal qualities can be ascribed to each part of the dispute. The true continuity of Russian political development is a continuity of inconsistency. Historically inherited inconsistencies are only exacerbated since the collapse of communism. The postcommunist situation in Russia resembles a field of contestation, or a game whose rules are being constantly renegotiated. In this game, no quality can remain uniform or fixed for any prolonged period. The ideological and institutional chaos of a transition period sharpened the traditional ambiguity of political values and behaviour. This ambiguity now exceeds historically accepted levels, becomes intolerable, and breeds an anticipated reaction.

If any consistent pattern in postcommunist public opinion and political behaviour may be observed at all, it reveals a desperate desire of the population to stop further degeneration of the state and society and to stabilize the political situation on whatever grounds seem better suited at the moment. This pattern of situational adaptation to rapidly

changing reality appears in the late perestroika period and may be illustrated by people's response to Gorbachev's initiatives aimed at the last-moment salvation of the Soviet Union. In the referendum on establishing a "renewed Union," called on 17 March 1991, 80 percent of the Soviet electorate showed up, and 76.4 percent of those supported the idea. In Russia proper, 73.6 percent of the turnout voted for a renewed Union (see Sakwa, 1993: 427). Yet, only several months later, most of the same voters endorsed state independence of the former Union republics, thus dismantling the Soviet Union in practice. Both in the Baltic republics and in Ukraine, predominant numbers of the local Russian minorities voted for independence.

If the March 1991 vote may be regarded as conservative, how should one explain the "revolutionary" support of Ukrainian independence by the Ukrainian Russian community in the December 1, 1991 referendum? Why did Muscovites back Yeltsin, and not the plotters of the notorious August 1991 coup? After all, preservation of the Soviet Union was both a declared and an implicit goal of the short-lived "putsch." Why everywhere throughout the country, with the exception of East Moldova (the self-proclaimed Transdniester Republic), did the local Russians react surprisingly calmly to the declarations of independence of the respective national republics?

They wanted to prevent a complete collapse of the government and governance in general by halting the rampant devolution of authority on the republican, regional, or even local level. The Union "centre" had demonstrated its incapacity abundantly, and the mandate given to Gorbachev at the March referendum expired without having been used. By late August, traditional conservatism in Russia had to wear "revolutionary" garb in resisting the putschists' attempt to undermine whatever shape of stability existed at the moment. The "dual power" situation in Moscow masked the real disappearance of the "centre" for all practical purposes and its essential takeover by the new Russian government. In fact, most Russians did not even have to throw their support behind the "democrats": it was more than enough to turn away from the "communists" and let the State Committee for the State of Emergency fall by itself. And it promptly did. The paradoxical "revolutionary conservatism" reasserted itself as the main feature of mass political culture in Russia circa 1991. This inherently paradoxical attitude and the style of political behaviour was largely responsible for the

regime's change by the end of the year.

Revolutionary Conservatism

Though "revolutionism as conservatism" had been ascribed to the Russian intelligentsia as early as 1908 (cf. Zviglianich, 1993, ch. 1), its deeper historical significance and contemporary manifestations still have to be elaborated. I will attempt to illustrate this phenomenon on the level of mass attitudes and behaviour, rather than on the usually invoked elite level. It appears that post-Soviet events are no less indicative of it than the earlier phases in Russian history. However, it is those earlier phases that established a peculiar pattern of Russian development, whose clearly recognizable impact on the society's political culture one cannot ignore.

More than one author saw Russian history as a succession of several prolonged periods of stagnation, separated one from another and occasionally punctuated by short-lived catastrophes, that sometimes brought the desired change in their wake, but also laid the ground for a new variant of staleness. Russia has never experienced its own Renaissance[1] or Reformation, though indigenous proto-reformational heresies did exist, culminating in the "New Teaching" of Feodosii Kosoi and other Russian Antitrinitarians (see Klibanov, 1977, ch. 3). The intra-church debates were usually won by the powers-that-were. Whatever changes the Russian Orthodox Church experienced in its makeup, they have never had any revolutionary impact on either its doctrine or the ritual. On balance, all attempts to reform the Church along lines not dissimilar to those pursued by Western Protestantism did not grow to anything more than disunited, outpowered and eventually marginalized "reformation movements," rather than the full-blown Russian counterpart of the Reformation as a complex (and completed) historical event (see Klibanov, 1960).

Having missed the Reformation, Russia nevertheless managed to suffer substantial turmoil, owing to the largely bureaucratic and, in a sense, counter-reformational Nikonian reform of 1653. The latter was aimed at organizational streamlining and unification of some

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[1]Academician D.S. Likhachev and other contemporary Russian scholars tend to interpret some cultural developments of the late XIV - early XVI centuries as witnessing that the "Pre-Renaissance epoch" was in the making. Even if so, the premature death of the cultural movement they refer to under Ivan IV is quite telling in and of itself. See: Sukhov, 1989, ch. 3.

elements in ritual. Being oriented to old Greek standards, it actually strove to strengthen religious and sociopolitical conservatism, not undermine it (Sukhov, 1989, ch. 5). The public reaction (raskol) was a burst of desperation: revolutionary in form, it completely denied "innovations" for the sake of "old ways," that is, the traditional Russian practices. Though the proposed reform was, in fact, no reform at all, it split the Church in two parts, trying to outcompete each other with the preferred brand of religious conservatism. The net result of the schism was "to weaken the power of the church and to make it more dependent on the government for support" (Shoemaker, 1993: 13). Authoritarian tendencies in the government naturally gained further momentum.

Many authors trace the source of the Russian troubles to the extended period of Tatar-Mongol domination. Russia had suffered 240 years of Mongol overlordship that essentially brought the country's development to a halt. Be it for this or for another reason, Russia was the last country in Europe to abolish serfdom (save the Russia-controlled part of Poland, where serfdom was repealed by the imperial Russian administration); it was among the last to finally embark on the path of unobstructed capitalist development. Russia did not develop a modern legal system until the late XIX century; it did not have a Constitution until the early XX century. By 1917, it lagged behind all other European monarchies in its constitutional development, the degree of power sharing between the central and the local government, advances in public administration, and other aspects of political development. Very soon, the October 1917 Revolution thwarted whatever small progress on all these issues had been made before. In R. Pipes's view (1993; 1994), the Bolshevik regime continued "patrimonial" patterns of governance and servility inherited from the early, Mongol-influenced Muscovy.

At the same time, Russia was the venue for several most dramatic and prolonged peasant wars and rebellions. It could also boast the shortest period of transition from Medieval Ages to the Age of Reason (the Petrine epoch), and, though it had missed the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, three revolutions of the early XX century compensated that generously. Though it is probably true that "in the long run there is no appreciable difference in this respect" between Russia and a number of other nations, at least in terms of the "frequency, length, and magnitude of these disturbances" (Sorokin, 1950: 30), the Russian

case is distinguished by extraordinary packing of the events of catastrophic character into relatively short segments of historical time.

The convulsive, spurt-like character of Russian development contrasted it sharply with a more balanced evolution in Europe. The recurrence of stagnation after the most radical efforts at reorganization prohibits parallels to North America, Japan, or late developers in South-East Asia. The ill fate of any reform undertaken in Russia so far, including the postcommunist stage of development, may only group it together with some countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, but, given the profound difference in political and socioeconomic history, makes the Russian case truly unique. One of the ways to grasp this uniqueness for the purposes of representation, if not explanation, is to look at Russian revolutionary conservatism as a persisting pattern of the national political culture, not just an idiosyncrasy of the national history.

Of course, culture itself was shaped by history, but, once shaped, it acquired a potential to influence its subsequent flow. The emergence of Russian conservatism has been attributed to a number of factors. Most of the researchers tend to agree that the frontier position of the country, together with its peculiar vulnerability to external aggression, tilted the balance between tradition and innovation in favour of the once found ways of existence. At least on this account Russia does not stand alone. Another large continental country in a similar situation, also suffering from an inability to effectively protect its lengthy borders and keep the invaders out, fell back on quite rigid traditionalism to maintain the deep inner core of its identity by means extraneous to military success and failure. Chinese political culture became an epitome for "tory conservatism" (Stewart, 1988), which had developed, embedded in political history and geography not wholly dissimilar to those of the Russians.

However, Russian conservatism is definitely peculiar in its ability to co-exist with a most radical, uncompromising tradition of changing the established political organization in a violent way (in China, we cannot find this pattern until the nationalist revolution of this century). The new regime, once it emerges as victorious, immediately falls back on the familiar ways of development, and shapes the conservative modes of political behaviour in its own image. Though it is true that "the eventual conservative aftermath of a great social revolution may be a kind of historical law," few people would deny that Russia has been

experiencing this pattern in a more intense and persistent way than many other countries, even managing to rise, in the Brezhnevist Soviet Union, above the rest as "one of the most conservative countries in the world" (Cohen, 1985: 147, 146). Post-Soviet illustrations of this paradigm include not only paradoxical support for both Gorbachev's "renewed Union" and Yeltsin's "sovereign Russia" in 1991. The Russian President also enjoyed some kind of popular mandate in a violent clash with the first post-Soviet parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies, in October 1993, while only a couple of months before, in the April 1993 referendum on the executive-legislative relations and general confidence in the government, most of the participating Russian voters divided their sympathies almost equally between the two contending branches of power. Political observers had grounds to interpret the results as "a vote against a dramatic change of course and for the retention of both branches of power" (Shevtsova, 1995: 21). Why, then, was Yeltsin backed in his less than conciliatory move in October 1993?

Apparently, the Russian public felt some forceful measures were necessary to stabilize the situation. Here is the paradox: Russian conservatism, though fearful of change, is even more fearful of the change uncontrolled. The public may be willing to give a mandate for a violent action to the government that pledges to prevent a larger disorder with a limited use of force. Of course, the government has to be seen, at a minimum, as legitimate and capable of exercising the control it seeks. That is why the 1991 "putschists" were doomed right from the start: the government they represented had been already dead in people's minds and close to full paralysis in institutional reality.

The unique combination of cautiousness and prompted decisiveness that characterized Russian revolutionary conservatism was revealed in 1993 no less than in 1991, but the concrete outcome of the events was shaped by public assessment of the actors involved in both crises:

> As a result, many of the same factors that had been at work in August 1991 were at work in October 1993, although the direction of their effect was changed. Whereas Yeltsin's legitimacy and the military's fear of split worked against intervention in 1991, in 1993 they worked in favour of intervention. (Lepingwell, 1995: 81).

Not only formal legitimacy was important: after all, the coup plotters had legal status as

members of the higher political hierarchy. Both in 1991 and in 1993, the "putschists" had Vice Presidents of the country on their side: Yanaev, the Vice President of the USSR, in 1991, and Rutskoi, the Vice President of the Russian Federation, in 1993. All "power ministers" (defense, security, internal affairs) rallied on the "wrong side" in 1991, and many elected representatives of the people, including the speaker of the parliament (Khasbulatov) did the same in 1993.

Yeltsin's personal charisma can only partially explain the 1991 outcome, and even less the outcome of the 1993 stand-off that had followed the period of bitter dissatisfaction with Gaidar's "shock therapy" policies, endorsed by the President. It seems, however, that in both cases the Russian populace backed stabilization efforts of the government, and did not fail to support a stronger contender in a dispute. Yeltsin was stronger than the communist reactionaries in 1991, and he indeed offered some hope for improvement in economy and politics alike, while his opponents could promise only the return to widely unpopular oscillating policies of the late Gorbachev era, if not to an outright dictatorship. Dictatorship had to be based on force, which required a minimum of ideological and institutional commitment on the part of millions of rank-and-file functionaries, who alone could make the dictatorship work. And precisely this element had been missing - a fact that did not go unnoticed and contributed to the perceived weakness of the "junta." On the other hand, Yeltsin did manage to win some active support in the national capital and substantial passive sympathy nation-wide. "His" institutions (newly created institutions of the Russian presidency and the national government) were working and attracting cadres, while the institutions of the old regime, the so-called Soviet "centre", had been paralysed and demoralized by Gorbachev's ill-conceived innovations. Yeltsinites were stronger both morally and institutionally.

By the end of 1993, "democrats" had largely lost their moral appeal, but more than compensated that in political, institutional, and economic power they had appropriated. While the coup plotters in 1991 lacked control to such an extent that they could not even transmit the command properly, let alone get it implemented (disobedience of several military units and an elite "Alpha" anti-terrorist group illustrates the point), Yeltsin, in 1993, did not have much trouble convincing military and police chiefs in Moscow of the necessity

to suppress opposition with brutal force. As earlier, the Russian populace predominantly backed the side of order and stability, and tolerated forceful ("revolutionary") measures that were believed unavoidable in the situation of protracted and seemingly insoluble executive-legislative crisis. However, the order wanted was order on the move, not the reactionary return to the situation before the reforms started. Several surveys showed that, as N. Petro rightly noted, "this was clearly not a desire for a new dictatorship", rather for "something that could be termed a modern version of constrained autocracy" (1995: 151).

Perhaps, seeing the autocratic longings, though "constrained" and "modernized," in contemporary Russian political culture still yields too strong a wording to adequately represent the problem. I would rather characterize the leading Russian vision of today as a variant of the developmental-authoritarianist model, with strongly revealed democratic elements. In a short span of 3-5 years, Russians have definitely learned to cherish at least such basics of democracy as free and contested elections, freedom of speech, conscience, religion, mass communication and association. These and other fundamental "rights and freedoms of man and citizen" are guaranteed by the Russian Constitution, adopted by the referendum on 12 December 1993 (see Constitution, 1995, ch. 2). According to a recent poll, reported by Nezavisimaya gazeta on 1 August 1996, freedom of press and free elections of political leadership are valued more than other aspects of democracy. Significantly, the same poll indicated majority support for the current presidential republic as a preferred from of government, while only 21 percent nostalgically mentioned a republic of Soviets, and mere 11 percent indicated a parliamentary democracy (OMRI Daily Digest, 2 August 1996). Given the nature of the present presidential regime, one might hypothesize that Russians value freedom as mostly individual prerogative exercised within an orderly institutional context, provided by a strong and responsible executive. Vast powers of the president, endorsed by the Constitution, apparently do not ignite many worries on the part of the electorate. It is not a structural disequilibrium between executive and legislative branches of power, or the absence of the Western-type system of checks and balances that troubles an ordinary voter. Rather, it is a demonstrated abuse of either presidential or parliamentary powers, or, even worse, a demonstrated incapacity to exercise them "properly", i.e., according to the commonly-held understanding of right and wrong, just or unjust.

The revolutionary part of Russian conservative behaviour may be revealed in a variety of ways, some of them least expected by an external observer. The so-called "red-brown" vote in the 1993 State Duma elections presents a good example of the dilemma involved. As it is well known, immediately after the shelling of the Russian Parliament and the arrest of parliamentary leaders, the Russian public appeared passive, if not totally supportive of the President. Yet, only two months later, in the elections to the newly constituted State Duma of the Russian Federation, pro-Yeltsin parties suffered humiliating defeat. About 24 percent of the vote was given to the radical nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, chaired by Vladimir Zhirinovsky, and an additional 14 percent - to the somewhat reformed, yet unashamedly "red", Communist Party of the Russian Federation, resurrected by Gennady Zyuganov. Most common interpretations attributed the fact to antidemocratic propensities of the Russian political culture, blamed Soviet-style "mass society," cautioned against aggressive nationalism, and drew parallels to the last years of the Weimar Republic. Others acknowledged the protest vote, exercised under conditions of stress and specifically aimed against unfair advantage, given to the pro-presidential Russia's Choice party by the government (Shevtsova, 1995: 24). However, the protest vote would have to be consistent with earlier probed values and inclinations of the electorate. The problem was, it was not.

Almost all survey researchers from the West who conducted field studies in the late perestroika and early post-Soviet periods noted large and growing support for democratic values, individual rights and freedoms, reasonable inequality of income, private property and market economy (see Bahry and Silver, 1990; Finifter and Mickiewicz, 1992; Miller et al., 1993). The conclusions were sometimes so optimistic as to put the Russian electorate on the identical, or not significantly different, plank of "preparedness for democracy" as the American, or other Western public (Hahn, 1993). Yet, the humiliated Russia's Choice espoused just these liberal-democratic values. Presumably, they were shared by a sound plurality of democratic neophytes all over Russia. Why did these people fail to support the political organization so neatly fitting their beliefs? A combined analysis of polls and surveys conducted before December 1993 elections and the elections themselves

> suggest a curious paradox: many of those whose values an outside analyst may classify as at least partially democratic refuse to vote (or at least failed to vote, at the end of 1993) for candidates explicitly identified with a

democratic program or nominated by a democratic party. (Dallin, 1995: 259).

Whether this can be explained as just a peculiar instance of the "protest vote" remains to be seen. A differently accentuated explanation might well be closer to the point.

The meaning-structure that shaped this peculiar voting behaviour had been formed through juxtaposition of the traditional Russian and later-bred Soviet longing for "order" (promptly noted by Finifter and Mickiewicz, 1992; Bahry, 1993) with the late perestroika and early post-Soviet understanding of what that "order" should be like in terms of political guarantees for individual choice and certain restrictions on the monopoly of power exercised by the state. The notion of "constrained autocracy" coined by Petro largely misses the point, because the Russian idea of how "constrained" the central powers should be, by 1993, had outgrown the limits that could have still allowed discourse, however metaphorical, about "autocracy." The conservative strand of the national political culture, with its "abiding anxiety that another disaster forever looms" (Cohen, 1985: 148), was primarily responsible for rejecting the dilettantish neo-liberalism of Yegor Gaidar and other "democrats," whose experimentation with social and economic fundamentals plunged the country into chaos. Conservatism meant advocating stabilization through the retreat to already tested policies, and those could not be anything else but moderated Sovietism of the CPRF variety. For those who were not happy with that option, there were no other alternatives but turning to Great Russian patriotism and nationalism. Since more respectable parties of the Christian Democratic opposition could not register in time for the elections (Petro, 1995: 155), Zhirinovsky managed to capture the great share of the vote that was not his due.

However, the LDPR's success was not completely accidental. It has to be read as one more "revolutionary" manifestation of the established pattern of Russian revolutionary conservatism. The initial widespread support given to the Bolsheviks by the Russian peasantry belongs to the same row of events, if approached from the political-culturalist perspective. By late 1993, Zhirinovsky epitomized both conservative longing for lost "greatness" and the readiness to apply quite radical means to achieve it. The party he chairs did not waste time to dissociate itself from both the old communist regime and the new "democratic" oligarchy. When both sides to the executive-legislative conflict of 1991-93 appeared to lose - the first, because of the methods used by the presidential group to solve

the dispute, and the second, because of the undeniable likeness to the old Soviet nomenklatura they had demonstrated - Zhirinovsky's LDPR emerged victorious as the one and only political actor, known to the wider public as: (a) anti-communist; (b) not sponsored by the government; and (c) sufficiently close to the frustrations and hopes of an ordinary citizen. In this situation, the more "preferential treatment by the state-controlled media" (Shevtsova, 1995: 24) Russia's Choice received, the more outraged the Russian public was, witnessing an attempt to stack the elections in favour of the incumbent government. The support given to the LDPR served to prevent restoration of the one-party system, albeit in a "democratic" makeup, that would be able to steal the results of the limited democratization already achieved. This support was conservative in its vision and goals of stabilization, and, partially, in its dreams to recover the lost superpower status of the country. It was "revolutionary" in its eagerness to stop the process of power reconsolidation which would have moved Russia one step closer to the presidential democradura of a Latin American type[2].

The results of 1996 presidential elections revealed the same attitude of cautious conservatism in voting for the widely unpopular Yeltsin, only to block the perspective of power monopolization in the hands of the CPRF. It might be argued that the Russian public once again used its dramatically inconsistent vote to compensate for the absence of an effective system of institutional checks and balances, that would make a fledgling democracy work. In the December 1995 State Duma elections, the reformed Communists won 22.3 percent of the party-list vote and 58 seats out of 225 allocated for single-member districts. The results of the combined party-list and single-member vote brought them 157 Duma seats, or more than one third of all seats in the lower house of the Federal Assembly (see OMRI Daily Digest, 27 December 1995; 2 January 1996). Together with their allies, such as the procommunist Agrarian Party of Russia (20 seats), Power to the People group (9 seats), less significant groups on the left, and a number of left-oriented independent deputies, the Communists were in no difficulty to secure a simple majority in the Duma. Only 55 candidates of the pro-governmental Our Home is Russia made it to the parliament, while the

[2] The Peruvian government under President Alberto K. Fujimori may serve as a case in point.

radical reformist Russia's Democratic Choice had to reduce its already small representation (76 seats won in 1993 elections) to a mere nine deputies!

In this circumstance, the communist victory in 1996 presidential elections seemed inevitable. All polls showed Gennady Zyuganov leading over Boris Yeltsin with a substantial margin. However, by the late spring 1996 Yeltsin started narrowing the gap, and the first round of elections on 16 June brought him 35.28 percent of all votes cast, while Zyuganov finished second with 32.03 percent (Rossiiskaia gazeta, 22 June 1996). The subsequent conclusive victory of the incumbent president in the second round voting on 3 July, despite allegations of a fraudulent vote count in several regions, cannot be attributed wholly to manipulation by the government, nor just to the enormous advantage Yeltsin had in campaign spending, propaganda and organization. Even when all these factors are discounted, the naked truth that the majority of active voters did not want to endorse a communist candidate still stands.

And yet, the same active part of the electorate paved the Communists' way back to the federal legislature. The paradox is not dissimilar to that of 1993, and should be explained along the same lines. Just as in 1993, the Russian public strove to prevent monopolization of power - then, by the radical reformers associated with the government, now by the reformed, but recognizable neo-Communists, associated with the dislodged government of the past. In both cases, there were some signs of the electoral "revolt", specifically aimed to deny the existing government control over the national legislature. Yet, the conservative side of the "revolutionary-conservative" posture eventually prevailed. It was revealed in the nationalist vote of 1993, because the unlikely "red-brown" coalition was the only surrogate the Russians had, at the moment, to substitute for a "normal" civil society, that was supposed to open a new space of political participation beyond the reach of the government. In 1996, conservative cautiousness was demonstrated in more direct way. By then, Yeltsin became identified with postcommunist stability, while Zyuganov meant a new round of turmoil, political and economic reshuffling, institutional restructuring, and psychological uncertainty. Russians were fed up with all this since the infamous Gorbachev's perestroika (literally: restructuring) experimentation, aptly dubbed katastroika by Aleksandr Zinoviev (1992). As much as one third of those who voted for Yeltsin were in reality indifferent to his victory,

according to a survey by the established Russian pollster, but they voted as they did to block the prospects of a communist takeover (see OMRI Daily Digest, 29 August 1996; Kommersant-Daily, same date). As many times before, Russians showed that they indeed preferred order and stability, which, being left as it is, makes quite a trivial observation. No known nation values chaos and anarchy. The concrete content of this or that preferred "order," on the contrary, makes all the difference. While the pattern of Russian "revolutionary conservatism" persisted over time, its historical modifications were worlds apart, even when the seemingly close postcommunist elections of 1993 and 1995-96 are taken into account.

Developmental Authoritarianism

Modern connotations of both "developmentalism" and "authoritarianism" apparently preclude a meaningful application of the terms to a period before the late XIX century. Nevertheless, under the risk of being accused of anachronistic stretching of the notion, I would maintain that an autocratic strand in Russian elite political culture was from early on (that is, shortly after the Moscow principality evolved into the early Muscovite monarchy) burdened with two close correlates of the idea of development, namely: (a) the idea of growth, territorial expansion ("ingathering of lands"), and (b) the idea of continuity, succession and perseverance ("the Third Rome"). The "ingathering of lands" was morally and dynastically justified, at the time, by their previous "loss" to a foreign aggressor: Mongols, Poles and Lithuanians. A self-aggrandising perception of Byzantine inheritance helped to give some sense to the messianistic "Third Rome" ideology: after the fall of Constantinople, Russia appeared as the largest centre of Orthodox Christianity in Europe, and Russian rulers strove to capitalize on this in both political and symbolic (prestige) terms. Messianistic thrust of the Russian national idea connoted not only a manifest destiny, but also an idea of gradual ascension toward spiritual and moral betterment, progressive self-fulfilment of the national whole. The closest thing Russians could have to the ideology of "development" before Peter the Great was inner perfection on the basis of individual and societal loyalty to the "genuine faith." Even most radical visions of social and political change were, by necessity, couched in this language, naturally varying the concrete content

that the "genuine faith" acquired in the hands of this or that thinker (see Klibanov, 1977). Largely peaceful territorial expansion into scarcely populated areas (see Sorokin, 1950: 12-15) played a secular counterpart to this understanding of development, moving the boundaries of the "Christian world" east and south of the Muscovite heartland.

Since one of the tsar's primary responsibilities was to be a "defender of faith" (a designation quite similar to that of the British monarchs), and a "defender" had to be strong, both religious perfectionism and its secular counterpart - proselytizing by incorporation - implied that the country's and the people's movement through history ("development") were to be based on the undivided and therefore not weakened rule of the hereditary monarch. The latter, however, had to be a "goodwilled" champion of Truth and Justice. Political power was deemed legitimate through its moral, not legal, justification. "In social thought, winning over authoritarianism originally revealed itself as affirmation of the authority of Truth" (Klibanov, 1977: 49).

The authoritarian thrust of elite political culture was heavily based on a perception of the external threat to the Russian state and society. Given the continuous history of foreign invasions, we cannot say it was completely unwarranted. Russia had occupied a precarious position between the "pagan" nomadic East and the "unfaithful" Roman Catholic West; the threat from both sides was not only military, but also cultural in character. Since the balance of forces had been conspicuously unfavourable to the young Muscovite state, the "Third Rome" mentality could not mean any offensive imperialist inclinations on the part of the Russian rulers. On the contrary: it signified perseverance in the face of an overwhelming enemy, and the moral obligation to endure. "Contrary to commonly held opinion (formulated in the 19th century), the theory of Moscow the Third Rome did not function as an aggressive or expansionist (imperialist) ideology of the Russian state..." (Raeff, 1994: 145). Though conservative and protective undertones of the idea prevailed, they did not close the space for its moralistic and perfectionist readings, which were, in a sense, dynamic interpretations in terms of spiritual growth and self-fulfilment.

The ambiguous character of the political culture of Muscovy can be appreciated through analysis of that period in Russian history which many historians unequivocally depict as the reign of terror, associated with the rule of Ivan IV "The Terrible" (1533-1584).

While Ivan's personal despotism and ruthlessness in suppression of both real and imaginary enemies are all well known and much reiterated, the reforms he initiated and implemented in financial, military, and judicial affairs of the state, and his attempts at moderate church reform are out of fashion with researchers. Ivan was "also responsible for the creation of Russia's first parliament, the Zemskii Sobor ("Assembly of the Land"), which he convened in 1550 and again in 1566" (Shoemaker, 1993: 10). Whether this proto-parliamentary institution was "true" or "not true" in its representative and decision-making functions (see Roselle and Young, 1981: 129; Petro's polemics with White in Petro, 1995: 32f), its very emergence signalled movement toward at least a potentially "constrained autocracy" (Petro, 1995), and the fact that it made its appearance during one of the most despotic periods in the Russian history tells much about real limits the autocratic power had to deal with.

Even more importantly, Ivan's period witnessed several manifestations of the alternative political culture, represented in particular by the Boyar Duma, a council of the most powerful hereditary landowners. Though boyars' interest in the strong state was no less than that of a tsar, they were opposed to the idea of unbridled autocracy and preferred an oligarchical rule. Boyars' "protest against an ever growing autocracy did not necessarily mean their support for decentralization. Autocracy and centralization are not synonymous. The Boyar Duma was precisely one of the elements of a centralized state" (Sukhov, 1989: 46). The boyars' understanding of the state interest differed from that of the tsar on several issues, including the role of the representative institutions or the issue of the service nobility (dvorianstvo). The estate of big hereditary landowners had little need for "strengthening of the military-bureaucratic autocratic regime. In this respect, its interests could sometimes even coincide with the interests of upper merchants' group" (Nosov, 1969: 11). Specifically, the reform aimed at decentralization of law enforcement and furthering the rights of local public administration, when managed by boyars, went as far as giving the urban merchants (posadskie) and even peasants the right to be locally elected as heads of the respective law-enforcing agencies (see Nosov, 1957: 305-306). Had the boyarstvo an opportunity to withstand the tsar and an historical chance to develop, the Russian own Magna Carta could have appeared shortly.

The alternative culture of the period was definitely demonstrated in the Russian

reformation movement, in writings and sermons of its leaders, whom the Orthodox establishment fought with all vigour and not infrequently subjected to death or exile: Matvei Bashkin, Feodosii Kosoi, Fedor Kuritsyn and others. To the tsar's dictum "everywhere there is no freedom" the heretics opposed their own thesis - "the soul is sovereign" (as cited in Klibanov, 1960: 337, 342). Kosoi went as far as to reject all external powers, those of the state and those of the church (Klibanov, 1960: 274-75, 277). His own iconoclast church was understood, in a radical protestant fashion, as a "gathering of faithful" and a "people's multitude", where no earthly "powers and authorities" were allowed to enter (see Klibanov, 1977: 79).

The less radical, but much more influential political position of the merchant bourgeoisie, well represented in the sobors of XVI and XVII centuries, was based on their power of financial credit to the government. In either structural or cultural terms, the "third estate" in Russia was not that different from its Western European twins. Structural similarities underpinned parallel positions vis-á-vis the state, similar social functions (from money making to money lending) and similar interests. Patterns in political participation, as one might have expected, closely followed these structural parallels. Merchant capital was active in demanding guarantees of personal freedom and freedom of domestic trade. It pressed for state protectionism against increased competition from foreigners; it sought extensive rights of local autonomy and self-administration on the level of cities and townships, etc. The right of participation in Zemskii Sobors and the right of petition to the tsar were used skilfully and continuously, making the Moscow government complain about "endless bothering" (dokuka besprestannaia) in one of the documents of the epoch (see Syromiatnikov, 1943: 129-139). The "endless bothering" of the rich burgers not only resulted in several documents codifying special rights and privileges of the posad at home, but largely determined the course of Russian foreign policies in XVI-XVII centuries. Be it war, peace, or bloodless territorial expansion of the state, all the "autocratic" decisions depended, in the last instance, on subsidies sought by the central government and given or denied by the "trade people" (Syromiatnikov, 1943: 203n).

It is this social group and its distinct political subculture that was most instrumental in advocating such a pattern of relationships between the state and society in Russia, which

we call developmental authoritarianism for lack of a better term. As numerous petitions to the Moscow government, administrative directives of this government (gramoty) and a number of legislative documents adopted by the sobors (sobornye ulozheniia) show, the ideology of the medieval Russian "middle class" was far from being unambiguously democratic. At the same time, if anything, it did not simply echo autocratic tendencies of the Muscovite monarchy. Posadskie had vested interests in a strong, centralized state that would defend them from capricious and often abusive local barons. Their immediate fortune depended on unrestricted trade rights and liquidation of local tariffs and levies, which was the task for the central government. In the mid-XVI century, following the British "discovery" of Arkhangelsk, Russian merchants had met their powerful West European competitors and started losing to them. Only the central government could help, which it did, when reminded of the connection between merchants' capitals and the state treasury (Syromiatnikov, 1943: 130). The trade estate had internal competitors as well, on both higher and lower ends of the social hierarchy. These domestic encroachments on the estate's monopoly of trade were also rebutted with the help of the government.

Appealing to the tsar over the heads of nobility and siding with the tsar against the older and more powerful families of hereditary princes and boyars had two major consequences: (a) consolidation of the Russian autocracy and (b) certain delegation of power to both representative (sobor) and administrative (central and local bureaucracies) institutions. Authoritarian tendencies of the monarchy were buttressed by both the service nobility and the merchant orders; however, the latter were also responsible for putting some checks on them. Authoritarianism that served the interests of the rising middle classes, especially the trade bourgeoisie, deserves a "developmental" qualifier for more than one reason. First, from the very beginning, this estate's vision of the "strong tsar" carried discernible signs of a constitutional monarchy, though predicated on common law to a much greater degree than on any uniformly codified body of legislative documents. Second, it had space for representative institutions, local self-government and the right of petition. Third, and most important, it was conceived as aimed specifically at the country's development in the sense of its nation- and state-building, consolidation of a domestic market and state protection of both domestic trade and fledgling domestic manufactures.

True, this brand of "ideology" created and furthered state-dependency to an extent that was, perhaps, never known to the leaders of the West European capitalism, such as Holland or Britain. And yet, authoritarianism supported by the Russian burgers significantly differed from an autocratic model favoured by tsars and their ideologues. Most of the latter dreamed of unrestrained autocracy for the sake of autocracy, invoking, at best, the "glory of the land" and preservation of the "true faith." The emerging bourgeoisie, on the other hand, needed autocracy constrained, but also regulated, if not manipulated, to the best benefit of the "third estate." From the sixteenth century on, even the territorial growth of the country was decoupled from the dynastic scramble to recover "lost dominions," and appeared to be increasingly governed by naked economic motifs (cf. Syromiatnikov, 203n). Through the linkage it established with military fortunes of the state, economic rationality became accepted in the upper classes of the Russian society and finally triumphed. The political culture of the posad prepared the ground for Peter the Great and his reforms.

Though Peter's rule was most certainly authoritarian and clearly developmental in its thrust, the precise balance between the two remains the question of scholarly debate in both Russia and the West. It is not our task to argue either the "benevolent" or "malevolent," the "progressive" or "defensive" character of the Petrine reforms (see Billington, 1970; Cracraft, 1988; Medushevskii, 1994; Raeff, 1971; Troitskii, 1974). The important thing is, Peter's design and implementation of the "well-ordered police state" (Syromiatnikov, 1943; Raeff, 1983) marked a decisive departure from the previous epoch of Muscovite feudal monarchy, which still had some space for a limited representation of social estates in the central government and local public administration. With Peter, Russia entered the period of absolutism, unambiguously defined, in the words of Article 20 of the "Military Articles" (1715): "His Majesty is an autocratic monarch, who does not have to answer for his acts to anyone in the world, but has power and authority to govern his states and lands as a Christian sovereign, according to his will and good judgment" (cited in Isaev, 1994: 102-103). Thus, the authoritarian part of the "developmental-authoritarian" political culture was, for the first time in Russian history, reinforced to such an extent that it could officially play a leading part in the tandem.

It is quite symptomatic that even under Peter ("even," because he definitely had

enough of both whim and power to move the country along much less "enlightened" and simply sultanistic ways of governance) the ideological and moral justification of the reforms was, nevertheless, framed in a language "of the 'universal national service', the 'fortress of justice,' or the 'common good.' He used 'interests of the state' almost synonymously with 'utility of the sovereign'" (Billington, 1970: 183). The pragmatic, rationalized, expedient character (or intentions) of the Petrine reforms are often reiterated, as are his conscious emulation of the West and forceful efforts at modernization of almost all aspects of the country's life. The one significant exception was the "second serfdom," which, if anything, grew only worse during the "great reformer's" rule. Even penal justice was vested with economic tasks, reminiscent of the "labour armies" of high Stalinism. As Peter himself once observed, "of course crimes and disorders must be punished; but at the same time my subjects' lives must be preserved as far as possible," since those lives apparently could be used to benefit the state (Cracraft, 1988: 26). The imperial bureaucracy created in this period supplanted old aristocratic ways of governance, leading to a change in "sources of social mobility" and in the composition of the ruling elite (Medushevskii, 1994: 45). According to the newly adopted Table of Ranks (1722), recruitment and promotion of public servants were to be based on the principles of merit and duration of service, rather than on earlier paramount blood lineages (see Troitskii, 1974: 104-118). Nobility ceased to be a caste and acquired features of a more or less open social class. If the emperor's "whim" produced these results, we are forced to admit that no matter how "oriental" Peter's rule had been in its despotic manifestations (Plekhanov, 1963), the reform he initiated was not only dictated by the West, but mostly Western-oriented in its essence, developmental in goals and rational-authoritarian in formally institutionalized means. Of course, this still says nothing about either the human cost of the reform or its "eventual" historical and philosophical "vindication." While answering the first question is not among the tasks of this study, the second one should properly remain open even in a most subjectivist inquiry.

With Peter, developmentally oriented authoritarianism became the ideal-typical model for the elite's political culture, just like the rationalized bureaucracy he created forms "the institutional basis of the imperial regime throughout the remainder of its existence" (Raeff, 1983: 201). Peter's concern with the state-led political and especially economic

transformation, development of the productive forces of the nation by conscious effort of the government, may be counted among the earliest manifestations of contemporary mercantilist policies that through the next two centuries proved themselves so helpful in spurring many of the late developers into modernity. The authoritarian foundation of the model was underscored by the fact that "nowhere else was the state to any comparable extent the demiurge of economic development" (Gerschenkron, 1991: 142). Also, nowhere else was the nation at large made as subservient to the dictates of "higher" state policies as was the case in Russia. The "well-ordered police state" created in this period was certainly more "police" than "well-ordered," with panegyrics to the police force being chanted even in the documents supposedly advancing local government and self-administration. Chief among them, the Regulation to the Chief Magistracy (1721), significantly stated that "the police promote rights and justice, engenders good order and morality ... assures the abundance of all that is needed for human life ... brings up the young ... [it] is the soul of civil society and of all good order, and the fundamental bulwark of civil security and well-being" (cited in Bogoslovskii, 1963: 24). Extensive use of coercion for the purposes of political and economic development of an abstractly understood "nation" (made virtually synonymous with the state) marked a profound rupture in the traditional Muscovite political culture. The latter was largely religious- and custom-based, personalized, ascriptive, but also (because of that) less uniform, allowing some diversity, and, at least potentially, more open to various paths of development. With Peter, the alternative options were eliminated. At a closer look, and contrary to Professor Pipes' learned opinion, it was not "patrimonialism" that so immensely structured Russian political-cultural and institutional evolution: a patrimonial phase of development occurred in all European countries, and was meticulously studied by Max Weber, focusing on the West European experience. Indeed, on several occasions Weber refers to the Roman Empire and clearly states that patrimonial manifestations "are to be found everywhere in Europe" (Weber, 1968: 228). Developmental authoritarianism of a distinct imperial Russian type, and not patrimonialism, was responsible for the modern evolution of Russian political culture, and it should be recognized as such, as a pattern of political behaviour and a real driving force of many state policies both before and after the 1917 Revolution. It is this force that, in the words of Peter's most prominent ideologue and

adviser, "opened up to thee, Russia, the way to all corners of the earth and carried thine power and glory to the remotest oceans, to the very limits set by thy own interests and by justice" (Prokopovich, 1963: 77). One might be prompted to add a caveat: the "justice" which, indeed, eventually "set the limits" to Russian expansion, was born and nourished by this very force, or, more specifically, by the insoluble contradiction between developmental ends and authoritarian means that, from Petrine times on, were unopposedly utilized at each and every turn in Russian politics.

The developmental-authoritarian directness of Soviet political culture is too obvious to dwell on this issue in any length. Both the Leninist "revolutionary dictatorship" (Arendt, 1966) and the Stalinist "revolution from above" (Tucker, 1990) attempted to solve developmental problems by extremely amplified (Lenin) or further hypertrophied ad absurdum (Stalin) executive or, rather, police action. The regime's official ideology was teleological and, at least in this sense, developmental. As reality goes, the net outcome of more or less consistently pursued policies of a "mercantilist semiwithdrawal" (see Wallerstein, 1995) from the world markets was, if not wholly successful, than not completely disastrous either. Soviet success stories in mass education, comprehensive though moderate health care and welfare, industry and defense technology, space exploration, etc., are not yet forgotten. Of course, concrete manifestations of the developmental-authoritarian pattern, as administered through totalitarian (1930-53) and subsequent phases in Soviet history, varied widely. The extent of its internalization by the people may be appreciated, paradoxically, in the very force of a popular demand for a change, raised in the last years of perestroika (1989-91). Two things have to be remembered here: (a) glasnost' revealed a dramatic gap between the "better-life" aspirations and the reality (thus thwarting the "development" side of the official myth, held dear by many), and (b) Gorbachev's manoeuvring between opposing sides and issues exposed the whole communist reformers' camp as opportunistic, incompetent and, most importantly, incapable of pushing anything through. Perestroika stripped the king of his clothes and showed him not only naked, but weak and whining, too. With the last vestiges of authoritativeness, the government literally lost whatever authority it had wielded before, even in the slow and pompous Brezhnev years.

However, developmental authoritarianism had been resurrected by Yeltsin's

"democrats" even before they seized power, following the demise of a lampoon August 1991 "putsch." The goal was now capitalist development, and the main instrument of its achievement a "liberal-democratic" state. The state had to liberalize prices, to impose financial discipline, to create a new system of taxation and enforce it, to demonopolize production, to privatize whole branches of the national economy, and so on. Through the "liberal" facade of a new postcommunist regime emerged the same old features of authoritarian statehood, with decisions being made by a narrow clique of the president and his cronies, with media controlled by the state and subsidized by the state-affiliated quasi-private capital, with opposition marginalized, if possible (the rule by decree), and ruthlessly suppressed, when "necessary" (October 1993, the 1994-96 war in Chechnya).

How could all of this happen? Was it a natural development, a predictable political-cultural continuity, or an unexpected aberration of Russia's uncertain progress to a Western-style liberal democracy? I believe the first explanation can be backed with strong empirical evidence. The genuinely liberal stream in Russian intellectual history has always been comparatively weak, squeezed, as it were, on both sides by potent conservative and revolutionist camps. Since the "Silver Age" of Russian social and political thought was terminated by the exile of its leading representatives abroad, personally ordered by Lenin (1922), this liberal tradition had lost its original roots in the country and became a factor of the emigré culture (see Petro, 1995: 73-78; Raeff, 1994). It took a change of generation to yield a crop of several open-minded individuals who transformed Khrushchev's "thaw" in something more than just another quirk in governmental policies (see Billington, 1970; Friedrich and Brzezinski, 1965; Barghoorn, 1965). Still, presenting those individuals as unqualified liberals would be a gross exaggeration. Two generations' removal from high Stalinism and the maturation of the Khrushchev's "youth" made perestroika possible. Though people of unquestionable moral integrity and genuine liberal convictions, like Andrei Sakharov, were among its forefathers, and despite some encouraging signs of intellectual following that they would not have had to be ashamed of, the long-awaited political parties of a "liberal orientation" in 1988-90 Soviet Union appeared as nothing but the radical right-wing groupings. The first of them, named the Democratic Union (DS), was aimed at revolutionary overthrow of the existing system from the very beginning. In January 1991,

during the party's Fifth Congress, the DS leader Valeriia Novodvorskaia called all its members and sympathisers to start an immediate "preparation for armed resistance" (Danilov, 1992). Among the first Russian "liberals," yielding in order of appearance only the Christian Democratic Union of Russia and the Democratic Party (DP), renamed Conservative soon after it was formed, was also the notorious Liberal-Democratic Party of Vladimir Zhirinovsky (created as the Liberal-Democratic Party of the Soviet Union in December 1989). It should have come as no surprise that the most liberal of all "liberal" parties, movements and groups at the moment, Democratic Russia, not only started showing "increasingly radical tactics" (McFaul, 1993: 64) as soon as it could lay claim to a privileged position with the victorious Yeltsin's government, but actually moved to support increasingly authoritarian policies of this government, once affiliated with it through a number of personal appointments.

The best known illustration of paradoxes involved in the "liberal-authoritarian" style of politics ushered in by the postcommunist Russian government is given by the shock therapy reforms that were initiated by then-Acting Prime Minister and subsequently the leader of Democratic Russia's offspring - the Russia's Democratic Choice party - Yegor Gaidar. As a good Hayekian, Gaidar has always acknowledged that "if the state, and only the state, legitimizes property ... there will be no market" (Gaidar, 1995: 27). This theoretical belief did not prevent him from using the state machine to confiscate lifetime people's savings (through price deregulation), to stifle "non-competitive" industries (through high taxes and drastic cuts in regular subsidies), to effectively bring industrial investment to a halt (through high interest rates) and so on. The net result of these policies was a one-third production fall in less than one year. As economist Leonid Abalkin noted at the time, shock therapy apparently maintained "a certain constant contradiction between production stimulation and improving the management of money circulation" (1994: 149). For a monetarist Gaidar, as for the IMF team behind him, the latter had been definitely more important than either production or living standards of the people. As even pro-reform theorists were forced to admit, "on the standard measures ... real income [in 1992] fell by one-half compared to the previous year and by one-third compared with 1985. The corresponding falls in consumption were 57 and 51 percent" (Illarionov, Layard and Orszag,

1994: 128). If in 1988 the percentage of people living below the poverty level in what was then the RSFSR stood at 6.3 percent, by September 1992 this figure grew to 37 percent of total population, including one-half of Russia's children (Diuk and Karatnycky, 1993: 49; Illarionov et al., 1994: 136).

Nevertheless, the "big bang" approach continued. Establishment of a market economy completely preoccupied the cabinet. Its economic policies were still conceived and implemented in such a way as to bring about an utter "destruction of the existing system at whatever cost" (Murrell, 1993: 112). By the end of 1994, the purportedly more "moderate" government of Victor Chernomyrdin, responding to the IMF calls for financial austerity, plunged living standards of 51 million of people, or more than one third of the total population, below the poverty line (OMRI Economic Digest, vol. 1, no. 1, 2 November 1995). Only increased reliance on self-help and various marginal "economies of subsistence" (see Rose, 1994) helped Russians to somewhat alleviate the burden of poverty in following years. However, this improvement could hardly be attributed to the success of governmental policies. If anything, it signalled a mass departure from participation in the distorted, but unified national market; it was a fragmentation of common economic space into millions of minute islands of private and semi-private activity which bore little resemblance to operations of the modern market, resurrecting, instead, something of a traditional, premodern household economy.

An authoritarian style of economic liberalization was evident in all aspects of the reform. The very fact that it had started with price deregulation, and not privatization, as one could naturally expect from self-proclaimed adepts of the Austrian school of economics, says much about its design, overall thrust and direct beneficiaries. Grass-roots capitalism was excluded from the very beginning by confiscatory policies of the central government. This left only two sources of capital, ready to be used in buying out of the state property: (a) the capital completely out of reach of the state (i.e., illegally accumulated, circulated and kept), and (b) the capital of the state itself, variously administered by its "public servants," industrial managers and other economic bureaucrats. "Nomenklatura privatization" appeared as the leading strategy, to be supplemented with "mafia privatization" as its alter ego (see Zaslavsky, 1995: 124-26).

State force was a primary agent of Russian recent economic transformation, and the ways of application of the state force were quite reminiscent of not only the Soviets, but even the rather remote imperial Russian past. As Gaidar's colleague and partner in the reform cabinet, and subsequently the First Deputy Prime Minister in the second-term Yeltsin's administration Anatoly Chubais (1994: 94, 97-99) recalls,

> a total of 4, 786 [large] enterprises have been included in the list for mandatory corporatization. [...] After the Presidential Decree ... was issued, it became mandatory to sell 29 percent of the shares of privatized enterprises through a voucher action in the first three months after the registration of a joint stock company. [...] Certain local attempts to halt privatization ... were met with resolute measures ... including ... an appeal to the Procurator-General of Russia...

The "mandate," "directive," and "resolute measures" language that Chubais shares with many other Russian "liberals" betrays the same authoritarian understanding of state-society relations that they are so quick to notice in contemporary Russian neo-communist discourse. The gist of the developmental-authoritarian approach to economic restructuring and remodelling, or socio-political "reshaping" has nothing to do with the catallactic (maintaining necessity of the spontaneous order) reasoning of classical liberalism. In Hayek's words,

> The central belief from which all liberal postulates may be said to spring is that more successful solutions of the problems of society are to be expected if we do not rely on the application of anyone's given knowledge, but encourage the interpersonal process of exchange of opinion from which better knowledge can be expected to emerge. (Hayek, 1978: 148).

The Chicago school's "given knowledge" is certainly no exception. But this idea still has to find its way to the heart of a Russian "liberal" politician. Taking ready-made prescriptions, applying them from the top, disregarding both customary ways and other (competing) opinions is the way the "liberal" politics of capitalist development is being pursued in Russia.

More insightful economic analysts could positively see that "the decision to adopt the shock therapy approach therefore probably arose as much from the old Soviet political culture, with its belief that society can be reshaped from the top, as from an understanding of the actual economic effects of the policies themselves" (Murrell, 1993: 135). If this is so, I would prefer not to use such terms as "revolutionary liberalism" or even "liberal authoritarianism" (Shevtsova, 1995) to characterize the postcommunist Russian politics of

Yeltsin's administration, even for the sake of convenient shorthand. As political economy goes, there was nothing liberal about the regime. Yes, prices were "liberated" - only to be fixed at monopolistic or oligopolistic levels by the state-sponsored industrial groups and even singular producers and wholesalers dominating the market. Yes, privatization of the state property was largely successful - only to transfer it into the hands of its former managers and their criminal associates. Yes, inflation was curbed -but the crisis of payments ensued, effectively suppressing demand and taking money out of circulation. Writing in 1994, the main theorist and a staunch defender of the reform underscores the contrast he sees between "nomenklatura privatization" of 1989-91 and the postcommunist "open, democratic privatization" of 1992-94 (Gaidar, 1995: 154). Yet even he, after the anticipated excuse ("the real shock therapy" in Russia "has never happened") is obliged to concede: "The alliance of mafia and corruption at the very beginning of capitalism can bear a hybrid so dreadful that it would be probably unparalleled in the Russian history" (Gaidar, 1995: 165, 195). But this alliance is nothing else but the product of postcommunist developmental-authoritarian policies, defended (surprisingly enough) by both Russian liberals and Russian neo-communists, though each party, obviously, adheres to its own vision of Russia's development. For the left, it is "either assent to the leading role of the working classes ... or find themselves in the camp of those betraying the Fatherland. There is no middle-of-the-road position here" (Zyuganov, 1994: 68). For the neoconservative right, it is either "an explosion (a new dictatorship) or 'unstitching' of social space, a transition from a bureaucratic to an open market ... from hidden, 'nomenklatura,' to an open, democratic privatization" (Gaidar, 1995: 154). Both sides talk about mutually excluding alternatives and show uncompromising stances. For both, the preferred alternative should be achieved by the state force which consistently implements a "given knowledge" design. With respect to the communists, this approach is anticipated. But for the liberals, it is rather counterintuitive. The "unstitching" of social space Russian-style must be accomplished through the governmental "big bang" hammering, which, along the way, would crush whatever fledgling sprouts of small independent business managed to appear before (as vestiges of "nomenklatura privatization"), and legitimize the large-scale theft of the national property through fraudulent investment schemes, closed auctions and the like (as "open

privatization"). The latter devices are believed to somehow launch a "truly market redistribution of property" (Gaidar, 1995: 164).

Since these two diametrically opposed (but nevertheless so similar in political-cultural terms) positions shape the whole spectrum of contemporary Russian politics (as the 1996 presidential elections witnessed), we may stop our discussion of the Russian developmental authoritarianism here, without bothering to go through the political platforms of other power contenders. The important thing is that most of them, from Zhirinovsky to Lebed, to Fedorov to Luzhkov, do not deviate from the pattern. The perennial weakness of the genuinely "central" political centre in the Russian politics is well known. It will be some time before developmental projects in Russia will have shed their authoritarian overtones, and developmental groups both inside and outside the state will start relying on people's grass-roots activity in practice, and not just in theory. Until this happens, substantial continuity in political culture of the Russian elite will still prevail over an otherwise easily discernible change in the culture's form.

The important thing to remember, though, is that this continuity is not ahistoric. Current statist visions incorporate much larger tolerance of political opposition and pluralism of opinion than was the case before. The emerging consensus implies subordination of authoritarian means to developmental ends, with increased awareness of the fact that those ends should not be postulated in some distant "radiant" future. Russian developmentalism has finally dropped its messianistic pretence. On the other hand, Russian authoritarianism is now constrained to such an extent that no "patrimonial" or "imperialist" analogies can play more than a limited illustrative role in its analysis. The political culture may still preserve important elements of the past, but the new institutions and new power games played out in a previously unimaginable, pluralized and fragmented political landscape have fractured the inherited patterns of behaviour in so many mediums that this sheer multiplicity of contending actors prevents us from making simple, straightforward conclusions with regard to the concrete outcome of developmental-authoritarian pursuits currently under way. After the decades of Marxist-Leninist unanimity and centuries of more or less despotic sobornost', the absence of a common denominator in the country's politics today becomes conspicuous. The search for the common denominator intensifies, and many analysts see nationalism as the

most prospective candidate to fill this vacancy.

Nationalism

Russia has never experienced anything close to the nationalist upheavals that shook nineteenth-century Europe. Russia's own Enlightenment (M. Lomonosov, N. Novikov, A. Radishchev) and Romanticism (V. Zhukovsky, M. Lermontov, Slavophiles) remained elite phenomena and did not start a mass movement of national consolidation. There was no Russian counterpart to Fichtean "Addresses to the German Nation." For all practical purposes, "Russia has been a state-nation rather than a nation-state ... identity has been centred on the state, which became an empire long before the population consolidated as a nation" (Goble, 1995: 163). Of course, the sense of patriotism was not alien to either Kievan Rus' warriors or medieval Muscovites. Religious, cultural, and ethnic bonds, including both language and territorial attachment, were also present long before the Age of Nationalism. However, ethnic distinctiveness could only lay the ground for the later national mobilization, not substitute it.

The reasons why Russia lagged behind Europe in its national development have much to do with its political culture, as described above. Revolutionary conservatism prevented a smooth evolution of state-society relations to such an extent that the society itself remained immature until very late into modernity. Authoritarian patterns of development, though moderately constrained by various manifestations of the alternative political culture (on which see Petro, 1995), predominated, underscoring society's subordinate role vis-á-vis the state. The state and the state-affiliated elite were viewed as primary agents of development, leaving the society at large to passively follow the lead. If the society (or its significant sectors) refused, the dissenters could not challenge the powers that were in a constructive way: their only choice was that between complete withdrawal from participation and a violent revolt, aimed to overthrow the government. "The national being," argues Wladimir Weidle, "which is more important than the national consciousness and should normally precede it, presupposes joint, though hierarchically divided, participation of all people in creation of higher spiritual values" (Weidle, 1956: 82). The underdevelopment of civil society precluded formation of the Russian nation, since no social prerequisites for the "joint

national being" existed before the abolition of serfdom in 1861.

The attempts to categorize various stages in development of the Russian nationalism according to the Hrochian scheme of three phases of national mobilization (Hroch, 1985) fall short of indicating anything like the crowning third stage of a mass national movement - either before or after the October 1917 Revolution. The stage of intellectuals may be found in the above-mentioned Russian Enlightenment and Romanticism, united, despite their differences, by the elite nature of both. The stage of "patriotic agitation," erroneously attributed to the Slavophiles (see Kaiser, 1994: 381), would probably better characterize the Russian populists of the late XIX century. Still, their concern was paramountly social and economic (land reform) and only marginally nationalist. The residual imperialism of the Russian narodniki, much lamented by representatives of the national-liberation movements of the Russian periphery, especially Ukrainians, hampered the development of a properly national program for the Russians themselves. The "dominant" nation remained dissolved in the overarching imperial whole, on the one hand, and in semi-primordial local communes, on the other: "Localism, rather than nationalism, was in evidence throughout prerevolutionary Russia" (Kaiser, 1994: 382).

Social and economic factors that had generated this situation are once and again brought to the fore: late development, delayed modernization and remnants of an estate society are all-time favourites. Political-cultural causes are invoked less frequently and with less enthusiasm. Curiously, those rare applications of political-cultural reasoning usually impart exactly the opposite conclusion: that nationalism in Russia existed, if not since the Kulikovo battle against Mongols in 1380, then definitely since "Moscow the Third Rome" idea was born in the XV century. The history of autocracy appears somehow blended with the history of Russian and Soviet nationalism. The "Russian Idea," in the name of Nikolai Berdiaev's book (1947), loses all touch with historical socioeconomic ground.

While supporting use of those instruments of inquiry that political culture theory can furnish, I strongly object against an uncritical presentation of medieval Russian statist ideologies as somehow demonstrating the emergence of the Russian nationalism in pre-modern times. When the monk Philotheus coined his "Moscow the Third Rome" dictum, neither he nor the great princes of Muscovy he addressed had the slightest interest in things

ethnocultural. The thrust of the idea was purely religious, not even imperial per se. Religious, not ethnocultural understanding of the Russian identity, is evident in the easy and speedy assimilation of christened Tatar warlords into the Russian nobility after the downfall of Kazan' and Astrakhan' khanates. Common faith, together with more pragmatic considerations, forced Aleksei Mikhailovich to join forces with the Ukrainians against the Poles in the Pereiaslav Treaty. The absolutist empire of Peter the Great and his successors was not and could not be built on the national principle. Even the famous "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality" formula of Count S. S. Uvarov, Minister of Education under Nikolai I, would be more adequately translated with "populism," instead of "nationality," in place of the third term. Uvarov's "nationality" was meant to be shaped through common religion and common allegiance to the Orthodox monarch (see Molchanov, 1996c: 69-70). As such, it was totally devoid of an ethnic component, being open to representatives of all peoples inhabiting the Empire.

The first conclusion for a political-cultural inquiry that one may draw after a brief assessment of the facts of Russian history is that, before attempting to interpret contemporary Russian nationalism, we have to explain why there was no mass nationalist sentiment earlier, even as late as the beginning of the twentieth century. As elite ("imperial") nationalism goes, no sustained attempts at Russification were undertaken by the tsarist government until the reign of Alexander III, i. e. well into the late nineteenth century (Seton-Watson, 1961, as cited in Dunlop, 1993: 45). Even then, though, the main thrust of such efforts as the Valuev Circular of 1863 or the Emsk Ukaz of 1876 was limited to bureaucratic "normalization" of education and arts policies, to counter a largely imaginary "separatist movement" in Ukraine, purportedly inspired by the foreign powers (Austria-Hungary). In other words, the reasoning behind those measures was statist, preservationist, authoritarian and conservative, but not nationalist per se. Xenophobic feelings on the part of Russian imperial elite and the supporting intellectuals, though probably present, did not provide the main rationale for the action.

The socio-demographic explanation of the absence of a nationalist sentiment and other related phenomena throughout most of the Russian history, including the entire pre-Soviet period, has much to do with the fact that Russia, not unlike the United States, matured

as a naturally formed "melting pot" of various "racial, ethic, national, and cultural groups and peoples" (Sorokin, 1950: 15). Mutual acculturation and assimilation prevented not only Russians themselves, but also other peoples of the empire, from taking that path of national development which might lead to ethnocultural consolidation through homogenization and exclusion of the national minorities as "others." There were no ethnonationally defined "others" in the Russian Empire, though parochial and religious divisions certainly existed.

The political-cultural reflection of this predicament bolstered a feeling of "unity in diversity," which exerted a "powerful influence upon the psychology, culture, and social life" (Sorokin, 1950: 15-16) of both Russia as a whole and Russians as its core, "imperial" nation. It is not accidental that in the Russian language the same word mir denotes, in various uses: (a) the entire universe; (b) a village or other primordial community, a clan, an immediate contact group; and (c) peace, in all its variations - from the absence of war to the tranquillity of mind. The intermingling of these semantic layers, which in itself says much about both the worldview reflected in the language and the real history that had formed that worldview, led one American analyst to acknowledge: "While to us the word peace has connotations of isolated tranquillity and a live-and-let-live philosophy, the Russian word mir connotes harmonious, coordinated togetherness." Thus, the Western vision of "the world as a collection of autonomous entities" has been traditionally alien to the Russians. Instead, they embraced the view of international and interethnic relations "as a social system, a system of ongoing relationships, a true (nonidealized) community of nations." (Klugman, 1989: 14). If other nations were traditionally taken as more or less distant, but natural extensions of one's own, and the latter - as an organic continuation of other nations' existence, ethnic nationalism had practically no cultural space to develop. The oft-cited Russian "messianism" directly bears upon this phenomenon and should be interpreted as a particular instance of cultural amorphousness which impedes separating one's own, specific national tasks from universal goals of humanity as a whole.

Cherishing "all-human" more than the "local," "indigenous" or "narrow national" in one's own country (but not failing to appreciate "indigenous" abroad) is a long-standing trait of all Russian culture, not only its political subsystem. In Sorokin's words, this phenomenon "presents a united nation whose unity is based not upon the ethnic or racial homogeneity of

its population but upon its diversity." (1950: 16). It should be added that, until relatively recently, Russian intellectual discourse had no place for the word "nation" in its specific Western sense. Instead, the much broader narod and its derivatives were employed, including Uvarov's narodnost' (erroneously translated as "nationality"). Narod, narodnost' and other words of this cluster de-emphasized clear ethnic or national characteristics and the respective boundaries, implying rather an amorphous unity of the folk. Of course, some internal gradations were slowly introduced. Thus, the general perception of "unity in diversity" implied substantially tighter unity for the "Christian folk," people of "genuine faith" and so on. Historical memory and perceptions of common destiny with regard to Ukrainians ("Little Russians") and Belarusians ("White Russians") crystallized into a notion of the "family" of all the Eastern Slavs fairly early, drawing, in turn, on much earlier and still undivided cultural material of the Kievan Rus' period (see Molchanov, 1991; 1996a). Being lulled by cultural closeness and similarities, Russians failed to appreciate differences until it was too late. The "brothers," much helped by the Soviet nationalities policy (see Zaslavsky, 1993) chose to go their own ways.

As an important observer of the "new Russian nationalism" rather tellingly noted, "if the Tsarist empire cannot, except for its closing years, be termed a Russian empire, much less can the Soviet empire be so considered" (Dunlop, 1993: 45). The whole design of the quasi-federal Soviet system, which aimed to contain non-Russian ethnic nationalism within administratively and territorially defined boundaries of the respective "titular" nationality, thus providing some modicum of satisfaction in the form of an "autonomous" national statehood, in fact nurtured the nationalist feelings and created nationalist elites where they did not exist before. As a result of the Soviet nationality policy,

> ... many nationalities became demographically more consolidated within their "homelands," acquired effective and articulate national political and intellectual elites, and developed a shared national consciousness. These more conscious and consolidated nationalities were "rooted" to specific territories, with abundant privileges for the titular nations and their local Communist elites. (Suny, 1993: 125)

Soviet federalism and autonomization, however imperfect or even false they might be, together with other, deliberately applied instruments of "institutionalization of ethnicity," instead of fostering the desired integration and even "merger" of nations, truly "promoted a

peculiar process of nation-building" (Zaslavsky, 1993: 33-34, 40).

However, this was not the case in Russia proper. The Russian ethnicity was not only "de-institutionalized"; its development was consciously blocked through a series of institutional, political and economic manoeuvres. Institutionally, Soviet Russia was denied its own Academy of Sciences, KGB or Ministry of Internal Affairs, national television, the whole set of ministries and central departments that were an expected attribute of any other Union republic. Politically, the Russian Federation did not have even a national capital of its own. The Russian section of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was not allowed to exist either. When the Leningrad oblast' party organization attempted to raise the issue with the "centre," the initiative group perished in the gulag under the drumroll of accusations of "Great Russian chauvinism." Meanwhile, the CPSU was constituted as a union of the national party branches, encompassing all the Union republics save Russia itself. The Russians were underrepresented in organs of Soviet power, and their party representation was also proportionately lower than that of the Georgians or the Jews. Russians were factually discriminated against in their level of access to intellectual professions and occupations. Judged by their representation in the ranks of scientific intelligentsia, Russians fared worse than Jews, Georgians, Armenians, or Estonians (see Friedgut, 1992: 219, Table 8.1).

Economically speaking, the predicament of the "imperial" Soviet nationality was not only no better, but in reality much worse than that of the majority of titular non-Russian nations. In R. Sakwa's observation,

> Not only the peripheral republics but Russia also was ruled by the Soviet Moscow in a neocolonialist manner, and the development of Russian national consciousness and statehood was inhibited. Russia itself was less defended against central policies than perhaps any of the other republics, and its social and economic welfare was neglected. Its educational level was among the worst of any of the other republics, and its standard of living was in the middle range. (1993: 104)

Budgetary policies and economic planning in general consistently favoured the periphery at the expense of the majority of Russian population. As a rule, less developed republics were ahead of Russia in terms of capital investment, industrial growth, state subsidies and the like (Bahry, 1987). However, by the end of the Soviet period, Russia became the net donor even

for most of the European non-Russian republics, which, on many indices, had been already more developed than the RSFSR itself. For example, if we compare the growth of industrial output in 1980-87, we see that the RSFSR lagged behind Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and most of the other republics. Consumer-goods production was higher per capita in all of the European non-Russian republics, excluding Georgia and Azerbaijan. Light industry produced fewer goods in Russia than in Belarus, Georgia, or Moldova, let alone the Baltic republics. The volume of paid services delivered in 1986-87 (per inhabitant) was lower in Russia than in Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Additionally, the Balts had better health care facilities and more doctors per unit of the population (see USSR Facts and Figures Annual, 1990: 396-98, 400, 405). The statistics are by no means exhaustive, just highly suggestive. Yet even against this backdrop the RSFSR continued its self-destructive subsidies to the ethnonational "periphery," producing, in the last years of the Soviet rule, about 61.1 percent of the USSR's net material product, while retaining only 55.3 percent of the state-budget revenue (USSR Facts and Figures Annual, 1991: 503).

It is little wonder, then, that by the late 1980s Russian nationalism, previously invisible and largely confined to circles of the creative intelligentsia, made a "big leap forward" in spreading its influence over much broader sectors of intellectuals, political elites and the Soviet "middle class" in general (see Dunlop, 1985; Dunlop, 1993). With glasnost', the linkage between the poor shape of the Russian national economy and the manifold international obligations both inside and outside the country became widespread knowledge. The lower living standards of the Russian people started to be increasingly attributed to the "imperial burden" abroad and subsidies to other subjects of the Soviet Union at home. The other Soviet republics, on their own part, were in the midst of a vociferous "sovereignization" campaign. While Gorbachev still attempted to play the shallow ideological constructs of a "Soviet Man" variety, Yeltsin and the Democratic Russia responded by raising the issue of Russian national interests. By December 1991, the newly born Russian national patriotism helped to secure a peaceful dissolution of the former superpower.

Since the end of the Union and especially after the "therapeutic" shocks of 1992-93, Russian nationalism became a factor in the mass politics, though not a paramount one. The

combined legislative representation of the "national-patriotic" bloc, comprising parties as different as the Liberal-Democratic (LDPR), Communist (CPRF), or Agrarian (APR), gradually grew from 42 percent of the seats in the State Duma after the December 1993 elections (calculated from Remington, 1994: 83, Table 3.1) to 54 percent of the seats in the election of 1995 (calculated from OMRI Daily Digest, 27 December 1995 and 2 January 1996). On the other hand, in April, 1995, the leading Russian polling organization VTsIOM conducted a poll, testing, among other things, party sympathies of the Russian population. The combined vote for those who only recently had been labelled the "red-brown" coalition (McFaul, 1993: 76-82) was only 20 percent; the united forces of the neoliberal "democrats" mastered less than 5 percent of the vote, while the centrists collected a not totally unexpected 22.5 percent of the total (see Gosudarstvenno-patrioticheskoe..., 1995: 192). The Russian electorate remains cautiously conservative, despite all hardships of the postcommunist transformation and the more openly nationalist mood of the legislators and the state officials in Moscow. The dramatic loss of popularity by Zhirinovsky's LDPR (from 24 percent of the party list vote in 1993 to slightly more than 11 percent in 1995) underscores the traditional Russian risk-avoidance and the lack of genuinely radical nationalist opposition.

Nevertheless, the new, postcommunist Russian nationalism is a fact and has to be explained by a political culture theorist. The collapse of the Soviet Union marked a political-cultural change: from seeing and keeping unity in diversity via the loss of diversity (first, the ability to appreciate it) to the internal fragmentation of the core identity and, consequently, both the political and cultural ruin of unity. Politically, this development is recognizable in the breakaway of the Chechen Republic, the weakening of the Russian state and its penetrative capacity, undeclared wars against its own citizens and closest neighbours, regionalism and localism. Culturally, postcommunist social atomization is the product of the preceding, ideologically driven development that disregarded all naturally formed allegiances and social bonds. The legacy of an artificial "moral order, incarnated in the real world on an enormous scale" (Gellner, 1993: 142) still hinders normal social interaction between individuals and groups, encouraging progressive retirement into one's individual self. Yet, in no modern society is complete personal isolation possible. In the absence of more developed structures, destroyed by the postcommunist transformation, rudimentary local,

corporate, religious or ethnic ties of solidarity fill the vacuum, thus resuscitating seemingly anachronistic forms of group mobilization. The new Russian nationalism should be properly counted as one of them.

It seems that, on many accounts, optimism with respect to the eventual prevailing of the Russian "nation-builders," to utilize Szporluk's (1989) phrase, over the Russian "empire-savers" may be premature. This is so not because the "empire-savers" are winning. On the contrary. Both sides to this dispute are losing: first, advocates of the "empire," now, advocates of the "nation." The retrograde process of the postcommunist "remodernization" yields results exactly opposite to those which were deemed conducive to the development of national consciousness in the West. Civil society is not being consolidated but rather further fractured; the gap between the elite and masses widens; market forces are pulling the country apart, instead of pulling its different parts together. Perhaps this condition is temporary and even necessary to bring the social layers, turned upside down and chaotically mixed by the communists, to their normal configuration. However, until this happens, the new Russian nationalism may exhibit more of the premodern than modern characteristics. In other words, if the traditional Russian locus of identification lay with the state, and not with the nation, now it may switch to neither nation nor the state, but rather to the immediate social surroundings of an unspecified nature (profession or occupation, locality, source of income, family). Nationalist consciousness per se will be fed through a negative feedback, by the force of frustration over the loss of a "bigger" identity in the situation where no normal ties of national allegiance and solidarity had a chance to develop.

The emergence of post-Soviet nationalism has been attributed to quite different and even opposite intellectual developments. On the one hand, there are people who argue that the driving force behind postcommunist nationalism is nothing else than developmental materialism of a Marxist-Leninist variety. It is this ideology, they assert, that should be held accountable for both the "loss of identity that modernization promotes" and the increased "sense of self-awareness" on the part of those suffering it (Hill, 1992: 68). On the other hand, instead of blaming soulless materialism, other analysts mention "the idealistic assumption of voluntary collectivism" that, by the harsh force of dialectical logic, "resulted in the society-wide institutionalization of opportunistic behaviour and free-rider problems"

(Gleason, 1992: 7). Postcommunist nationalism, in this "rational choice" picture, looks not unlike other forms of rent-seeking behaviour, though the political resource that the group utilizes for its collective action is of a special kind, namely, the principle of national self-determination itself (Gleason, 1992: 5-6). The intermediate position between the idealist and materialist poles was taken by Gellner, who, though not dealing specifically with nationalism in his 1993 Daedalus article, made a suggestion that directly bears upon the present discussion:

> It may be the pantheistic inheritance of Marxism ... which is to blame. [...] Marxian "materialism" ... ensured the inclusion of productive activities into the sphere of the sacred ... [which] means that a Marxist society is left with no humdrum sphere of the profane into which to escape during periods of diminished zeal and enthusiasm. (1993: 146)

In the first story, the logic of the society's intellectual development is presented as a sequence of (1) materialism - (2) modernization - (3) loss of identity - (4) reaction to it - (5) nationalism. In the second scenario, we can distinguish the following logical steps: (1) idealism -(2) reaction to it (utility-maximizing behaviour) - (3) group opportunism - (4) nationalism. The two stories, which by all accounts are complete opposites, come from the same collective monograph (Motyl, 1992). This alone shows that much more has to be done on the subject before some kind of scholarly consensus may emerge.

Gellner's explanation of the ultimate failure of "the world's first secular religion" (1993: 146), i. e. Soviet Marxism, seems to be quite relevant to this discussion and merits further examination, since it shows the third way of dealing with ideological transformation after the end of communism. Gellner points at the economic incapacity of the regime, whose final, if not sole, justification, was its alleged economic superiority over capitalism. He also mentions "the monolithic nature of the Soviet order, its Caesaro-Papism-Mamonism," which made the system "so rigid that when a large part of it went, everything went" (1993: 147). In this picture, post-Soviet nationalism would probably appear as a result of following developments: (1) Marx's "spiritual" materialism - (2) sacralization of the productive sphere in ideology - (3) economic failure - (4) ideological failure - (5) total collapse of a "monolithic" system - (6) nationalism as a manifestation of unexpected "instant pluralism" (Gellner, 1993: 153). Notwithstanding an appeal and elegancy of such a reconstruction, it has

to be refuted on the grounds of: (a) simplified presentation of the post-Stalinist political and ideological system, which had long since lost its formerly "monolithic" character, and (b) overrating of the unifying potential of the state ideology, that has never ruled as a "secular religion" in terms of its actual penetration into the belief system heeded by the Soviet citizens in day-to-day life.

Russian nationalism is a conservative reaction to the shocks of postcommunist development. Neither "idealist" nor "materialist" visions of the former communist ideology can fully explain it. A common-sense thesis that nationalism appeared "in the wake of communism" (Gleason, 1992: 5) provides a post hoc, not a propter hoc explanation. If the Soviet policies, not ideology, are a variable, they also did not bring nationalism about. They had only prepared ground for its subsequent inception. Nationalism appeared only when the Soviet system collapsed.

As a political-cultural phenomenon, Russian nationalism, on the elite level, represents an attempt to find a new mould for the developmental-authoritarian paradigm in the absence of a strong state, traditionally deemed to be a primary agent of change and innovation. On the mass level, the new nationalism successfully unites contradictory elements of the "revolutionary-conservative" behaviour within a single conceptual framework, since it strives to preserve the variously fractured edifice of the society from possible disintegration and simultaneously provides an outlet to channel social protest and frustration, inevitable in the situation of social and institutional uncertainty. This new Russian nationalism also indicates a more or less decisive disavowal of the former "unity in diversity" approach and reflects an understanding of the fact that the old Soviet "melting pot" failed. This does not mean, however, that it should be necessarily xenophobic. The established political-cultural models die hard, and in this instance it promises some hope for a revitalized Russian Federation. Yet visions of "unity" and "diversity" will have to be substantially reformulated, renegotiated in the ongoing political debates and internalized by the public. Until then, the spectres of the imperial past are likely to haunt both Russian domestic and international politics.

Chapter 5. POLITICAL CULTURE AND NATIONALITY IN UKRAINE.

Until recently, discussion of Ukrainian political culture, as nationally specific and distinct from the Russian, was all but absent in either Western or domestic Ukrainian academic discourse. At best, the topic was addressed under the rather diminishing "political subcultures" umbrella (White, 1979: 50-51), and even then in passim. Academic institutions of the Ukrainian SSR understandably could not go far beyond the standard critiques of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." Simple positing of the question of separate trends and features in Ukrainian political culture amounted to that very "nationalism" itself, and was diligently avoided. Western scholars, trapped by a model requiring political culture to be a property of a fully independent nation, ignored the issue altogether. The Ukrainian diaspora thinkers in the West concentrated their efforts mostly on history, literature, and anthropology; those few of them who happened to be political scientists largely followed the mainstream academic trend for the fear of being accused of political partisanship. Though some of them contributed to the discussions of the Soviet and Russian nationality policies, Ukrainian political culture was not made the focus of these studies.

After the Soviet Union collapsed, numerous works on the "Ukrainian national idea," Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian own traditions of statehood appeared in print in the newly independent state and abroad[1]. Some attention to the subject of the post-Soviet political culture has been paid as well (Golovakha et al., 1993; Polokhalo, 1995). However, the latter accounts lacked historical depth, just as the "national idea" historiography never bothered to look in any detail for political-cultural underpinnings of postulated national specificity. In this work, I attempt to overcome these shortfalls through the explicit analysis of a national profile of the Ukrainian political culture, and, inversely, of political-cultural foundations of the contemporary national landscape in the country. The problem of Ukrainian nationalism, though important in itself, will constitute only a part of this overview.

Historical background

Ukrainian ethnos belongs to the Eastern Slavic group of peoples, which includes also Russians and Belarusians (Belorussians). Among the Eastern Slavs, Ukrainians follow

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1See, for example Ivanyshyn, 1992; Potichnyj et al., 1992; Diuk and Karatnycky, 1993; Krawchenko, 1993; Shmorhun, 1994; Tkachenko, 1994; Kyryliuk, 1995; Peoples, Nations, Identities, 1995.

Russians in population and the size of the ethnic homeland. The present Ukrainian state is also the second most populous of all the former Soviet republics, and the third (after Russia and Kazakstan) in its territory.

The Ukrainian language forms a part of the Eastern Slavic group of the Indo-European family of languages. Ukrainian and Russian are mutually comprehensible and almost identical in their basic grammar structures; so are Russian and Belarusian, and Belarusian and Ukrainian. Ukrainian is closer to the Western Slavic languages than either Russian or Belarusian; the distance between Ukrainian and Polish or Ukrainian and Slovak is probably not bigger than that between Spanish and Portuguese languages. Contemporary Ukrainian language harbors several officially recognized dialects, concentrated mostly in the western part of the country and in the adjacent Eastern European states. The other language of continuous use is Russian. The debate over the actual spread of both languages and linguistic preferences of masses of population is still going on: statistical data is open for new and retroactive reinterpretations, while current sociological surveys demonstrate a continuing bilingualism of the predominant part of population (Arel and Khmelko, 1996).

The ethnic composition of the Ukrainian nation is complex. In addition to the titular nationality, Ukrainians, it includes also a large Russian minority (22.1% of all population), Jews, Belarusians, Bulgarians, Poles, Crimean Tatars, Romanians, Hungarians, Greeks, Germans, Slovaks, and others (see Yevtoukh, 1995: 70-71). Most of these have inhabited the territory of their current settlement for at least several centuries, while some of them, including local Russians of the eastern Ukraine and Belarusians of the northwestern part of the country, may have territorial attachments equal to that of the Ukrainian ethnic group itself. A sizable part of the population was brought in as a result of Soviet and post-Soviet era migrations. However, this fact does not significantly change the relative standing of the above-mentioned groups in terms of their respective shares in the whole population of the country.

The Ukrainian state in its modern format is a phenomenon of the twentieth century. Ukraine has never known a history of fully independent statehood before 1917. The quick succession of nationalist governments in 1917-20 was interrupted by the communist regime of quasi-federalist co-existence with other republics of the former Soviet Union. World War II saw an attempt by the Ukrainian nationalists to create something like a semi-autonomous province under the German Nazi occupation. However, the attempt ended in complete

failure, as its champions had never approached even that limited degree of formal state independence that was enjoyed, at the time, by the homegrown fascist satellites of Germany in Eastern Europe: Hungary and Romania. The real history of Ukrainian state- and nation-building started in earnest after the December 1991 referendum, which effectively put an end to the Soviet regime in Ukraine and severed most of the Soviet-era links to Russia.

Interestingly enough, the state aspirations of the first Ukrainian nationalist government, Tsentral'na Rada, initially did not go beyond securing some degree of autonomy for Ukraine within a larger Russian Federation. According to the Rada's Third Universal, autonomous-federalist arrangements were accepted as a satisfactory model for building future relationships between Ukraine and Russia (Wade, 1993: 73). However, this option was, in the nationalists' view, quickly exhausted by the unfortunate "experiments" of the Bolshevik government in Petrograd. As early as December 1917, Rada oriented itself toward full independence from Bolshevik Russia.

This episode is telling in itself, for it shows an apparent lack of the state-building determination on the part of the government whose nationalist credentials are usually not disputed. Throughout most of Ukrainian history, the regular pattern of local elite political behavior was seeking affiliation with external power sources, rather than using the full potential of the indigenous power base available at the moment. In fact, even the dramatic events of the Ukrainian Liberation War (1648-54) can be interpreted either way: as the most visible example of initiative-taking and building the local power base to its fullest – or conversely, as an opportunistic switching of elite allegiances from one foreign overlord (Poland) to another (Russia).[2]

Among many controversial issues pertaining to the Ukrainian history the problem of its origins stands unrivalled because of its implications for national identity and current politics in both domestic and international arenas. The available answers to the question on the beginnings of Ukrainian history usually fall into one of the three categories that can be provisionally labeled Russocentric, nationalist, and realist. According to the Russocentric model, first advanced by the mainstream historians of the imperial Russia, Ukrainian history constitutes an inseparable part of the all-Russian developments. The ancient homeland of the Eastern Slavic tribes, Kievan Rus', is presented as an essentially proto-Russian state

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[2]This second interpretation is powerfully presented by N. I. Ulianov, 1996 (1966).

formation. The nationalist view, most eloquently elaborated by the early-twentieth century Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who also served as the first President of the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic, postulates a diametrically opposed view on the subject. According to Hrushevsky, Kievan Rus' is nothing more nor less than the first Ukrainian state, while Russians may not claim any descent from it whatsoever (Hrushevsky, 1965). An extreme version of this argument, originally advanced by long-forgotten Polish nationalist Franciszek Duchiński circa mid-nineteenth century (see Ulianov, 1996: 231-234; Rudnytsky, 1987: 187-201), has been recently reanimated in Ukrainian political discourse. It denies Russians not only state, or dynastic links to the Kievan principality, but even a degree of ethnic kinship to the "true" Eastern Slavs, presenting Russian ethnogenesis as a result of interbreeding between Mongol invaders and local "Finno-Ugric" tribes of the Volga basin. Finally, a realist argument views Kievan Rus' in a way similar to the one usually taken by the comparative historical approach with respect to other ancient state formations predating not only modern nation-states, but also medieval and absolutist empires that subsequently developed on the territory in question. In this view, presenting Kievan Rus' as either proto-Russian or proto-Ukrainian state is as convincing and scholarly solid as giving the Roman Empire a "proto-Italian" label, or speaking about direct continuity from the Merovingian or Carolingian states to contemporary France or Germany. The importance of the legacy of Kievan Rus' for all three contemporary Eastern Slavic nations is not disputed, though none of them is seen as having exclusive, or even predominant, rights to it against the competing claims of two other nations. This approach will guide our further discussion.

The problem of ethnogenesis

Most modern nations usually have an ethnic core, which, at some earlier point, served as a foundation for the nation-building efforts. This ethnic core could be revealed through the physical presence of a locally dominant ethnic group, or through selection and codification of a particular vernacular for common use within the national boundaries, or through religious affiliation of the majority of population, and also in numerous more specific ways related to traditions, customs, and other locally identifiable forms of collective activities. As several students of nationalism (Gellner, 1994; Hroch, 1985; Kedourie, 1993 et al.) have noted, language is found among the most powerful indicators of ethnicity. Development of a common vernacular from several local dialects marks new "ethnie's"

(Smith, 1986) coming into existence, just as the vernacular's further standardization, codification and dissemination in printed format lays the foundation for modern nation-building.

As archeological evidence shows, the spoken language of Kievan Rus was basically the same in Kiev and Lord Novgorod the Great. All three contemporary Eastern Slavic vernaculars developed on the basis of the ancient Rus'ian language and are mutually comprehensible because of this common lineage. After the introduction of Christianity by Kievan prince Vladimir (Volodimer) Sviatoslavovich (988 A. D.), Church Slavonic, first codified under the Southern Slavs' influence, was also used across all the Rus'ian lands along the trade route "from Varangians to Greeks" as a language of liturgy and literacy. Linguistic borrowing from other tribes (Khazars, Lithuanians, Turks, etc.) was unimportant.

It was not before the Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century and incorporation of the West Rus'ian lands into Lithuania and Poland a century later that linguistic and, hence, ethnic differentiation started to develop. By the end of the sixteenth century, the process of ethnogenesis had brought its fruit. It was possible to register differences between Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarusian languages on both "low" (folklore) and "high" (written document) levels. From about this time, the word "Ukrajina," first used as a mostly relative geographic designation ("borderland"), acquires more specific ethnic meaning. Hence, if we want to avoid anachronistic stretching of the word "Ukrainian," which in its current usage implies clear-cut ethnonymic connotations, we should not speak of Ukrainian history per se before the sixteenth century. The political and ethnosocial history of (what currently are) the Ukrainian lands is a wholly different matter, which surely merits attention in its own right. This latter one, however, should not be confused with the national history of the Ukrainian people, though the two will certainly overlap at some point. If, on the other hand, historical continuity between various state formations that occupied the same or roughly the same territory is made an explicit focus of analysis, the history of the Ukrainian lands becomes no more a part of the Ukrainian history as it is part to histories of Russia, Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary.

Political culture of a stateless nation

Difficulties that any periodization of the Ukrainian history immediately brings to the fore fade in comparison with those that await an attempt at political-cultural analysis of the

subject. The notion of political culture usually refers to the national traditions of governance. How to apply it to the country that, through the most of its history, was governed from outside? Should we settle for the analysis of local self-administration? Or look at the methods indigenous elites used in their negotiations with the external powers? Or narrow the search down to crucial historical figures (Khmelnytsky, Mazepa, Hrushevsky) and landmark events (Cossack rebellions, the Liberation War, the Revolution of 1917)? If only periods of state and quasi-state existence of the Ukrainian nation are included, the researcher finds himself dealing with the punctuated history of the Cossack Hetmanate – nationalist governments of this century – Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic – contemporary Ukrainian state. The degree of "stateness" would vary wildly from one case to another.

Some people shall question the inclusion of the Ukrainian SSR as a presumably "alien," imported state formation with severely circumscribed prerogatives with respect to its subject population. Whether an observation of the "alien" nature of the Soviet regime in Ukraine is valid or not, no one would deny the fact that the locus of power at the time was in Moscow, and not Kiev. The case for the national specificity of Soviet power in Ukraine is, therefore, flawed. Most of the approximately one hundred years of history of the Cossack Hetmanate also transpired under the conditions of rather precarious authority of the hetmans, whose power was progressively supplanted by the czarist government. Finally, two of the twentieth-century nationalist regimes were established under the German occupation and, therefore, should be regarded properly as puppet formations.

If anything, the history of Ukrainian statehood, or the lack thereof, betrays a profound shortage of political will on the part of Ukrainian statesmen and would-be-rulers. Since a negative result is also a result to be explained, I will address it in more detail below. The fact that the Ukrainian state failed to develop at an earlier time has much to do with a number of factors, such as prolonged history of foreign domination, precarious geopolitical location, prevalence of household economy over trade and manufactory, and so on. Many, if not all, of these factors were present, however, in the history of other nations, whose statehood, nevertheless, did not fall prey to their "natural" misfortunes. It is not implausible to argue that several historical junctures presented important "windows of opportunity" for the Ukrainian state to take off. For one instance, even before the Bohdan Khmelnytsky uprising (1648-54), the oligarchic Polish-Lithuanian state (Rzeczpospolita) in XVI-XVII centuries

was loose enough[3] for any concerted secessionist effort to bring its fruit. The polonized Ukrainian aristocracy of the time had never attempted such an endeavor. Later on, Khmelnytsky's successors had opportunities to build all the actual prerequisites of an independent state upon the military power they wielded and local support they could develop, but also failed to realize the possibility. In this century, the first Ukrainian government of intellectuals (Tsentral'na Rada), as already noted, was quite hesitant in assuming full responsibility for running the country. The wait-and-see reaction to the August 1991 putsch in Moscow by the postcommunist government of Leonid Kravchuk is also well known.[4] Apparently, in most of the cases, Ukrainian political elites sought accommodation and power sharing first, before assuming full control and, therefore, responsibility for the affairs of the country. This pattern of behavior started to change only after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and even then not at once. Accommodation appears as an important strategy in power games played out by Ukrainian political classes, and should be analyzed as a recurrent element of the Ukrainian political culture.

Strategies of accommodation

Predominantly risk-averse behavior of the Ukrainian political elites should not be interpreted as a lack of initiative or general inclination to passivity. On the contrary, it may demonstrate flexibility and willingness to compromise, if necessary. The history of foreign domination, when open conflict could hardly serve the interests of the Ukrainian dominant classes, understandably strengthened these features. The strategy of accommodation worked well in those cases, when key economic and social interests of local elite were not jeopardized by extraneous overlordship, which was in most instances true for both Grand Duchy of Lithuania and later the Russian Empire. The case of Poland was more specific because of the price Ukrainian nobles and, later, educated classes in general had to pay for being accepted as equals: Catholization. Next came Polonization, taking a heavy toll on once-Orthodox Western Ukrainian families:

> As it was only by becoming Polonized and adopting Roman Catholicism that they could enjoy any real equality of rights and privileges with the Poles, most of the more important and ambitious gentry of Galicia, Kholm, and Podolia had by the end of the fifteenth century taken this step. In the sixteenth century the

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[3]A succinct account is given in "Poland: History: The Commonwealth." Britannica Online.
[4]See Motyl, 1993; Kuzio and Wilson, 1994, and numerous local accounts in both Ukraine and Russia.

> same process took place in Volynia and along the Dnieper. Though the Act of the Union of 1569 promised to the local Orthodox landlords equal rights with the Catholics, the promise had not been kept, and it was not long before they realized that all roads were closed to them unless they adopted Catholicism and became Polonized. (Hrushevsky, 1970: 194).

The dynasty of the Ostrozhsky princes, among others, could serve as a quite illustrative example of this loss of identity. Catholization provoked the first important split in the ranks of the Ukrainian upper classes, namely, a divide between secular and clerical nobility. While the landed aristocracy could consider a change of faith as rather a small loss, compared to the guarantees of power and privileges, the Orthodox clergy sometimes preferred to fight for what was, in Bourdieu's (1977) terminology, their symbolic capital: control over the spiritual domain of the nation.

The important thing, however, is that both factions sought external protection and even external arbiters to their dispute, being drawn, respectively, to either Poland or Muscovy (Russia). Catholicized Ukrainian nobles were visible in the ranks of Polish aristocracy (szlachta), while the Orthodox bishops from Ukraine greatly influenced the religious, cultural, and even political development of Russia, especially following their mass recruitment to prominent state positions by Peter the Great. The linguistic proximity of Ukrainian to both Russian and Polish languages substantially facilitated easy adaptation of Ukrainian elites to the extraneous political and cultural environment. In post-Petrine Russia, co-optation of the Ukrainian upper classes into the ranks of two topmost orders of the Empire – nobility (dvorianstvo) and clergy (dukhovenstvo) – was extensive. In this respect, the Ukrainian elite was hardly surpassed by the elite groups of any of the other nationalities. In fact, the czarist administration had never treated Ukrainians as a minority and never discriminated against Ukrainian culture and language until the second half of the nineteenth century. In Valery Tishkov's (1992: 45-46) observation,

> Imperial laws were based on a notion of "one nation" which included ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians, as well as the peoples of the Volga-Urals region which had formed part of the Empire since the 16th century. All these subjects acted according to one set of laws and regulations.

This situation changed, when external events – European revolutions of 1848 and their later repercussions in Poland (the nationalist uprising of 1863) and elsewhere – forced imperial bureaucracy to address the threat of local separatism more seriously than before. The ukases

restricting the use of the Ukrainian language understandably provoked nationalist response among some part of the Ukrainian intellectuals. "Yet, even as the nationalist construction of the ethnic enemy gained in power," notes R. Suny (1992: 25), "the economic developmental policies of tsarism and considerations of security and profit attracted certain national bourgeoisies to try to work with the Russifying regime." Ukrainian industrialists and merchants, who never had to bear the label of "inorodtsy" ("aliens"), led the others in this endeavor.

The period from the Russian Revolution of 1917[5] to the December 1991 referendum on state independence of Ukraine saw several nationalist and several communist governments in Kiev. In most cases, the policies they pursued were policies of accommodation, if not appeasement, of the selected external powers. The initial autonomist stance of the Tsentral'na Rada vis-á-vis the Provisional Government in Petrograd fell well short of claiming full state sovereignty for the Ukrainian Republic. The short-lived Hetmanate of Pavlo Skoropadsky relied on German occupation forces as much as it did on former officers of the Russian imperial army. A quarter century later, the German Vermacht brought into reality another guest "Ukrainian" government under the leadership of Stepan Bandera and Iaroslav Stetsko. Perhaps only the Directory (1918-19) and some of its "island" reincarnations in the Ukrainian hinterland (for example, Volodymyr Oskilko's "republic" in the Western Ukraine), and the People's Republic of the Western Ukraine (ZUNR) might be regarded as political formations of a more genuine sovereigntist nature. Yet, the Directory's foreign policy was hardly fully independent. In seeking protection from abroad, it trailed foreign policies of the countries of the Entente, especially France.

The Ukrainian SSR is often treated as a case of a token statehood (Markus, 1984; Diuk and Karatnycky, 1993; Motyl, 1993, et al.). The Soviet regime inflicted colossal tragedies upon the Ukrainian people. Population loss incurred only during the Great Famine of 1932-33, according to recent estimates, exceeded 4 million people (Pirozhkov, 1993: 89). Millions more fell victims to the 1917 Revolution and the Civil War or perished in the GULAG. World War II brought immense sufferings and turned Ukrainians against Ukrainians, as some of them actively resisted the Soviet advance westward, while the others

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[5]Properly speaking, there was one Russian Revolution of great scope and intensity in 1917. It started with dethroning of Nicholas II in February and culminated in mass Bolshevization of local Soviets in October-December, which, in turn, prepared the ground for the Civil War of 1918-21.

were part and parcel of that advance (see Armstrong, 1990). The worst ecological disaster of this century, the Chornobyl' nuclear plant failure (1986), also happened on Ukrainian land, when it was essentially ruled from Moscow, and in the widespread opinion, should be attributed to managerial mistakes and general inefficiency of the respective chain of command. Finally, the seventy-something years of Soviet power saw creeping Russification of Ukrainian social and cultural life. Linguistic policies promoted Russian as a language of "international communication," while rapid industrialization, inter-republican migration and the growing number of ethnically mixed families further shrank the space where Ukrainian was spoken (see Krawchenko, 1985).

All this being said and taken into account, the question of the Ukrainian political elite's own role in the establishment and maintenance of the Soviet regime in Ukraine remains, nevertheless, open. It is no secret that Ukrainians constituted a large part of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Ukrainians, just as Ukrainian-born Jews and Ukrainian-born Russians, were admitted to the very top of the Stalinist leadership, where they played a most active role in policy design and implementation. Before the revolution, Bolshevik cells proliferated in Yekaterinoslav (now Dnipropetrovsk), Kharkiv, Odessa, Lugansk, Kiev and other Ukrainian cities and towns, including also several railway hubs in the Volyn'–Polissia area. After the revolution, the first Soviet government in Ukraine relied as much on the local support of organized urban proletariat in Kharkiv and elsewhere as it did on help from Petrograd and Moscow (see Wade, 1993). Most of the communist bosses in the Ukrainian SSR were locally born, or spent the formative part of their life in Ukraine. The Great Famine of 1933 would also have been impossible without the active collaboration of local elites who clearly did not pursue genocidal objectives sometimes attributed to the regime (Green, 1996). Treating Bolshevism as a phenomenon wholly alien to the Ukrainian political tradition amounts to wiping out or distorting a good part of modern Ukrainian history.

For more perceptive authors, there is little doubt as to whether the radical leftist, collectivist trend of political thought and behavior constitutes an integral part of modern political, social and intellectual development in Ukraine (see Rudnytsky, 1987: 91-122). Stalinism in Ukraine would not be possible without local elite participation. Even more important to remember is the role of the Ukrainian cadres in governing the all-Union empire. This fact alone could question the common perception of Ukraine as a colony or semi-colony

of the Soviet Russia. In no known colony were indigenous administrators allowed to have any say over the affairs of metropoly. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the Ukrainian-grown party and state officials from Kaganovich and Voroshilov to Khrushchev and Brezhnev overwhelmed Moscow's political leadership. On the mass level, Ukrainians were hardly discriminated against either. As a rule, they were better educated, had better living conditions and better urban infrastructure than the majority of the Russian Federation's citizens. If Ukraine's status within the USSR resembled that of a colony, that was certainly not because of economic deprivation, but rather because of political domination exercised from Moscow (Motyl, 1993). However, the Moscow center itself had little to do with the Russian Federation as an ethnopolitical entity, even less with ethnic Russia proper. Moscow remained a cosmopolitan capital of the multinational empire, equally distanced from any of its constituent units and their national interests. The central political elite in Moscow was simultaneously multinational in composition and nation-less in their long-term aspirations and practical politics. Ukrainians constituted an important part of this selected group of ethnically nation-less Soviet rulers.

The political culture of accommodation did not appear out of the blue. The precarious situation of Ukrainian political elites, squeezed between powerful enemies and for several centuries dominated from abroad, largely predetermined this feature. Certainly, manifestations of the alternative political culture abound – from Cossack uprisings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to Hetman Mazepa's unsuccessful attempt to change sides in the Russian-Swedish war (1709) to the rebellious "Ukrainian trend" within the CP(b)U (Kostiuk, 1960: 38-42) to the prolonged guerilla warfare of the Ukrainian nationalists against Soviet authorities in 1944-49. However, these belonged to the culture of the minority – minority in both senses of its smaller numbers and usually subordinate position it occupied in the existent power structure. The dominant trend of the elite's political behavior was little different from that of the masses:

> …to pursue a policy of survival, with the understanding that nothing could alter Ukraine's colonial exploitation by … superpowers. Most Ukrainians were indeed passive and accepted such a position … (Hunczak, 1993: 103)

Whether being non-rebellious is tantamount to being passive is a separate question, which I prefer to answer in the negative. However, there is little doubt that "policy of survival," of day-to-day tactical and long-term strategic accommodation to generally adverse, foreign-

dominated environment profoundly shaped operational codes of the Ukrainian political culture.

The post-Soviet period witnessed new manifestations of this pattern of behavior. Leonid Kravchuk's generally conciliatory stance toward the putschists' attempt to declare the state of emergency in August 1991 is only one of the better-known episodes of this character. Though the Ukrainian government moved to announce the country's independence only a couple of days later, it was not before the coup in Moscow had already failed, dissuaded by the organized resistance of Yeltsin supporters. Some of those who at the time represented liberal-democratic opposition in Ukraine confided to this author that they saw Kravchuk's actions as simply being the desire of the Ukrainian nomenklatura "to isolate Ukraine from democratic, Yeltsin's Russia, rather than protect it from the old Soviet Union."[6]

The subsequent turn to Ukrainian nationalism as a state-building platform, which was skillfully exercised by the Kravchuk administration, is variously interpreted as an example of political opportunism on the part of the old communist elite, a matter of expediency, or a case of a genuine political rebirth, prompted by the clear manifestation of popular will in December 1991 referendum. Most interpretations, notwithstanding their differences, view the change of political course as (1) totally unexpected, and (2) as a manifestation of creative political will on the part of Ukrainian leadership. Closer analysis of the events shows, however, that Kravchuk was literally forced into the "new course" by the collapse of the Moscow center. The ultimate failure of the central Soviet authorities to provide reliable finance and credit, enforce contracts between economic subjects in different Soviet republics or engineer viable monetary and fiscal policies moved former "vassals" to step into those spheres of activity that heretofore were closed to them. Having found themselves largely on their own as early as 1990, the republican leaders had little choice but to claim a full measure of responsibility over economic (and hence, political) affairs in their respective "protectorates" – or relinquish authority to someone else.

The Soviet system of quasi-corporate associations (see Molchanov, 1996b) was organized in such a way that any profound change of managerial nature immediately

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[6]Personal interview with members of the Kharkiv branch of Inter-Regional Deputies' Group, October 1991.

prompted respective political and ideological adjustments. The economic decentralization of 1990-91 ended the particular Soviet form of the state, which was federal in form, but unitary in its real functioning. The blueprint for a new political form had been encoded in no other document than the USSR Constitution itself, which carried the right of the national self-determination (up to secession), as a token reminder of revolutionary origins of the state and its presumably democratic character. Substituting the principle of national self-determination for the principle of inevitable progression to future communist society meant relying on nationalism, not communism, as the ideological platform of the state. Given the fact that Kravchuk really wanted to keep his power in the republic, he had no other option but to embrace some form of ideology promoting the "national interests" of the country.

The Ukrainian communists-turned-nationalists had several constituencies to please. First and foremost, postcommunist nationalism was a middle-management response to the collapse of the central authority. The accelerating break-up of the Soviet Union had to be stopped at some better-prepared "line of defense." What Gorbachev mockingly called the "parade of sovereignties" was, in essence, nothing else than reconsolidation of the local oligarchy's grip on power, capital, and resources that they were originally authorized to manage on behalf of the center. Administrative boundaries between the republics and autonomies appeared as natural boundaries, sheltering local bosses from the ruinous impact of central policies. Simultaneously, these barriers helped to neutralize competing claims of other power pretenders – both inside and outside the republic. From this perspective, the "national revolutions" of 1989-91 may be modeled after the better studied process of a big firm's fragmentation into a number of smaller enterprises, each with its own resources, production lines, independent management, organizational culture and, last but not least, mission statements. "Nomenklatura" nationalism fits in as the best available candidate for a "mission statement" at the republican level.

Secondly, both Kravchuk's and Kuchma's presidential administrations had to deal with an organized political opposition. Especially during Leonid Kravchuk's term in office (1991-94), the power of the nationalist opposition, clearly visible in both parliamentary debates and street manifestations, was only barely matched by other opposition factions. Democratization appeared synonymous with Ukrainianization, as even use of the Russian language in public debate was immediately exposed as a sign of "imperial" sympathies of the speaker. Though half of the population used Russian for their day-to-day communication

(Arel and Khmelko, 1996), the concept of the Russophone Ukrainian nation was absent. In this situation, most of the newly formed political parties were keen on proving their Ukrainian credentials. Politics in Ukraine had to be construed as Ukrainian, which at the time meant fitting it within rather strict linguistic and ethnocultural frameworks. New strategies of accommodation, developed by the ruling elite, could not ignore such an important and vociferous constituency as the nationalist one. The approach chosen by Leonid Kravchuk and his group was to take over a significant part of the nationalist platform, trying to consciously incorporate it into the policies of a newly independent state (Motyl, 1993).

The third element feeding into postcommunist nationalism in Ukraine is the Ukrainian diaspora in the West. A large portion of nationally conscious Ukrainians living in the USA, Canada, and countries of Western Europe appeared there due to the unfortunate encounter they or their ancestors had with the Soviet power. Those who fled the Western Ukraine after its occupation by the Red Army in 1939, and those who fought Stalinism in 1941-49 hardly distinguished between the Soviet regime and its Russophone administrators. The same attitude was paramount among representatives of the dissident nationalist movement of 1960-85, which has also brought significant numbers of anti-Soviet and anti-Russian refugees to the West. It is no coincidence that many in the diaspora are still connected with radical nationalist, anti-Russian parties.

Though nationalists do not make the largest part of the Ukrainian diaspora, they are better organized and well financed. They have ready access to the important "hawkish" figures of the Cold War era, and exert much effort, trying to influence both public opinion and the governments of their respective host countries. Most importantly, they usually serve as an interface between the West and their ancestral homeland in numerous capacities of journalists, interpreters, analysts and researchers, advisers and staff members of international institutions, western embassies and business firms active in Ukraine. For many in Ukraine, the West begins with an encounter with one of these persons.

The late perestroika period and the first phase of independence in Ukraine were distinguished by the rather naïve "hope that the West will assist in some way" (Marples, 1991: 223). In this perception, the West has taken the place previously occupied by Moscow. In many practical ways, the West, mythologized as a supreme authority, protector and arbiter of internal and international disputes, came to be personified by representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora. Thus, by pleasing diaspora, the new Ukrainian elite hoped to please

diaspora's host countries and what they referred to as the "civilized world" in general. In a process not dissimilar to the one experienced by the Baltic countries (see Lieven, 1993), nationalism became a symbolic sign of "Westernization."

Postcommunist nationalism in Ukraine was, therefore, in no way a revolutionary undertaking. On the contrary, it may serve as a good illustration of what I believe is a persistent feature of the Ukrainian political culture – the recurrent preference Ukrainian political elites give to strategies of accommodation over the strategies of contention. Looking for a powerful regulator who would be able to solve the most pressing problems of domestic governance, Ukrainian political elites historically changed sides between Lithuania and Poland, Russia, Austro-Hungary, and Germany. In the newest period, the USA and other NATO countries replaced the Soviet center as the focus of Ukraine's international attention.

Ukraine was the first among the Soviet successor states to apply to the NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. Ukraine insisted on the western guarantees of its security as a condition to assent to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.[7] The westward move has reached its peak with signing of the Charter on Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine on 9 July 1997. It is not by chance that even the long-delayed Russian-Ukrainian Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation was finally accomplished on 30 May in the same year, as Ukrainians used the impending NATO-Ukraine summit in Madrid as a bargaining chip in their negotiations with Russians.

Domestically, the strategy of accommodation has been employed to minimize elite turnover as much as possible, even as new power pretenders were smoothly incorporated into the ranks of the postcommunist ruling class. The "party of power," as it was dubbed in Ukrainian journalism, had enough space for everyone: yesterday's and continuing communists, new and old nationalists, former dissidents and ideologically indifferent opportunists, free marketeers, gradualists, neo-Listians and those who staunchly opposed any economic reform whatsoever. The only condition required by the gatekeepers was to be able to exercise visible influence in the society through one's personal links to this or that strategically important resource. The nature of the resource itself was of somewhat lesser importance. Of course, control over financial and other material assets was most welcome, which should explain the prevalence of the "industrial lobby" in the Ukrainian corridors of

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[7]See more on that in Taylor, 1994: 16-24.

power. However, political connections, all forms of symbolic capital, links to a powerful constituency or pressure group, and clear regional support were all taken into consideration.

The concrete direction Ukrainian domestic and foreign policies took in 1991-97 was largely determined by the perceived "weight" of the counter-agent: be it the Moscow "center," domestic opposition, new Russia, or the West. In the majority of cases, the response given to the challenge was reactive, rather than pro-active. However, for the most of time, the response was also timely. Thus, Kuchma's administration started long-overdue economic reforms, when the Western sponsors made it clear that economic aid would otherwise be terminated. The Russian-Ukrainian treaty on the status of Sevastopol and the host of other issues related to the Black Sea Fleet's division and functioning was finalized, when the burden of the Ukrainian debt to Russia became intolerable. At about the same time, Ukraine had confirmed its acceptance of a "zero option" with regard to the external debts and assets of the former Soviet Union. The examples are many. They are not enough, however, to determine whether the strategy of accommodation will be an effective way to manage the country's affairs in a globalized, dynamic environment of the twenty-first century. Perhaps a more creative approach will be needed, and the new generation of Ukrainian leaders will have to provide it.

Fragmented polity

Late ethnogenesis, prolonged absence of national statehood and the history of country's division and re-division in multiple zones of domination have all contributed to the inconsistent and fragmented nature of Ukrainian political culture. Most recent studies, based upon extensive sociological surveys, characterize it as "ambivalent-conformist," with a potential to grow into "ambivalent-nihilist." (Golovakha et al., 1993: 130). The first label captures the widespread tendency of the population to embrace contradictory choices simultaneously. The 1991 polls on preservation of the Soviet Union (March) and proclamation of the Ukrainian sovereignty (December) are good examples of this inconsistency. In both cases, most of the Ukrainian people said "aye," thus giving their support to mutually exclusive ideas of state independence of Ukraine and its continued stateless (or quasi-state) existence inside the renewed Union. The "yes" – "yes" responses are also habitually given to capitalism and state tutelage, privatization and full employment, freedom of movement and residence permits ("propyska"), human rights and death penalty

(Golovakha et al., 1993). Since the respondents check all the "good things", Ukrainian sociologists describe the prevalent mood of the population as ambivalent and conformist.

The "ambivalent-nihilist" tendency in the Ukrainian political culture, though less evident at the moment, would show itself, according to the above mentioned authors, in total rejection of all given options, and even of the very necessity to make any choice whatsoever. In terms of political practices, "ambivalent nihilism" corresponds to either spontaneous outbursts of anarchy or, to the contrary, absolute passivity and conscious withdrawal from any from of participation. Of course, what is meant here is not so much a portrait of reality as rather an "ideal-typical" construct in the Weberian sense of the word. However, it is true that Ukrainian history has known both sleepy periods of local tranquility and apparent absence of any far-reaching ambitions on the part of the elite, and periods of mass rebellions, Cossack uprisings, peasant wars, pogroms and anarchy. The best known "practical political" anarchist of this century, Nestor Makhno, was a Ukrainian, and the regime he established in southern Ukraine during the Civil War could merit a separate study from the political-culturalist perspective.

Inconsistencies in Ukrainian political culture may be attributed to a number of things. One of the prominent factors in Ukrainian political life before and after the proclamation of independence has been its regionally fragmented character. The differences between the "nationally conscious" West and the pro-Russian East and South are many, starting with their profoundly dissimilar histories and ending with specificities in regional patterns of social and economic mobility. Historically speaking, the West of Ukraine was dominated by Poland and the Habsburg Empire, while the East experienced several centuries of Russian domination. Accordingly, both language and culture of the respective subject populations became either Polonized or Russified. Later on, in 1930s, the Eastern Ukrainian oblasti were slotted for rapid industrial development and collectivization, which drastically altered their social structure in favor of urban workers and professionals (see Krawchenko, 1985). The West, which at the time was beyond the reach of Soviets, could continue with the old ways. Consequently, it remained largely agricultural as late as the 1980s. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, a significant part of the Western Ukrainian population could rather painlessly re-orient its economic activities toward the bordering countries of East Central Europe. The East did not have a similar option and remained hostage to its minutely diversified ties to the Russian market.

Regional divide remains a standing feature of contemporary Ukrainian politics. Most of those who support nationalist parties and politicians are concentrated in the West, while the East harbors anti-nationalist, pro-Russian sentiments. The industrialized Eastern oblasti of Donetsk, Lugansk, Kharkiv and, to a large extent, Dnipropetrovsk have significant leftist constituencies: both the new Communist Party of Ukraine and the Socialist Party of Ukraine gain the largest share of their votes here. The Western Ukrainian lands of historical Galicia and Volyn', on the contrary, keep allegiance to the ideals of small entrepreneurship and private property (Politychnyi portret Ukrajiny 11 (1995): 6, 9-12). If the Western Ukrainian voters accept the idea of state activism in the economy, they usually justify it by the "national interests" dictum, rather than more common leftist considerations of "social justice" and "equality." Thus, regional "subcultures," noted by White (1979), definitely continue their side-by-side co-existence now.

Regional cleavages account for most obvious inconsistencies in Ukrainian political culture, as it is presented by sociologists. Regionalism is supplemented and reinforced by the religious divide. Its geography only imperfectly matches the contours of the regions. Religious history is even more complicated, as the example of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) shows. Though the Church originated from Vladimir's christening of the Kievan folk, its center had subsequently moved to Moscow. On one side, the continued presence of the ROC in Ukraine can by no means be regarded as a sign of alien influence. On the other side, the Moscow Patriarchate exhibits no particular interest in the Ukrainian independence, and has strong connections to the Russian neo-nationalist movement. The Greek Catholic Church, though a more recent phenomenon, also embodies several centuries of bitter struggle between Catholics and Orthodox Christians in the Western Ukrainian lands. Being itself a product of a compromise achieved by the Union of Brest (1596), the Greek Catholic Church continues to observe essentially Orthodox rites in its service, though abides by the supreme authority of the Pope. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was launched into existence as a confessional counterpart of the first independent Ukrainian state of this century – the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR). Judging by its origin, this Church, more than anything else, is a direct product of political struggle, as inter-confessional debates played no role in its conception. Finally, the most recent appearance has been made by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church–Kyiv Patriarchate, led by former ROC Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko). Though defrocked by the Moscow Patriarchate, Filaret received full support from Leonid

Kravchuk, who sponsored separation of the well-controlled "national" Ukrainian Church from Moscow as a necessary complement to his own state-building efforts.

All in all, there are five Christian churches operating in Ukraine, not counting smaller Protestant denominations and several Roman Catholic parishes. Here, we cannot articulate all the implications of this predicament for the political development of the country, though tracing contemporary political idiosyncrasies from their source in older religious struggles is a well-established procedure since publication of the respective work on political cleavages by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). For our purposes, it is enough to note that the pro-Russian orientation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate (canonically a part of the ROC) and the Russian Orthodox parishes in Ukraine are well balanced by traditionally anti-Russian orientations of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The situation inside the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) remains inconclusive. While its faithful continue to be divided in their sympathies, the leadership of the Church (Filaret and his circle) made a conscious stake on Ukrainian nationalism and anti-Russianism in both their clerical and political activities. The inside tensions sometimes burst into the open, as in the case when several formerly pro-Filaret bishops departed the UOC-KP to join its rival, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, led by Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan).

As Ukrainian political reality is fragmented into several regionally, religiously and ethnoculturally defined pieces, so is Ukrainian political culture. With the exception of the state-sponsored nationalism that was in full bloom in 1992-94 and somewhat subsided later, and the officially promoted Church (UOC-KP), whose fortunes have also changed after Kravchuk lost office, most of the political fragments of today have deep historical roots and, therefore, should be approached as political-cultural phenomena. Some of them boast a more distant origin, bearing several centuries of history in what appears as a standing divide. The seniority of the phenomena makes then look "natural," "primordial," and incompatible with their opposites on the other side. Contemporary ethnolinguistic division is the most obvious aspirant to the "fundamental" status. Regionalism comes close, and the religious divide follows.

Since language is taken as given, as something that is "just there," and presumably "was there" before, linguistic division between Ukrainophones and Russophones continues to be perceived as the most serious basis for both current and potential political cleavages

in the country. However, this view is one-sided. Historical trends should not be taken to signify only the force of inertia, but the force of change, too. If it is true that political culture and inherited cleavages largely frame subsequent development, then it is also true that everything that is currently "there" was sometime born and will sometime die. The "primordial" divisions are as much a product of historical idiosyncrasies as of anything else. The element of historical contingency in the contemporary political culture is no less strong than the element of continuity, which means that formerly suppressed sides of this or that cultural phenomenon may sooner or later reassert themselves, bringing about substantial recombination of all the available cultural material. Live politics remains the main vehicle of this change. Additionally, some elements of political culture itself make the change more or less easily achievable and the barriers between opposites more or less easily penetrable. The very fact that Ukrainian political culture had to be assembled from vastly incompatible pieces, with its fragmented character distinguishing it even now, makes mutual accommodation possible. After all, accommodating various powerful external regulators was something that Ukrainian political elites learned to do long ago. Consequently, all the "standing" divisions are, in fact, shifting. The dynamic nature of the Ukrainian political culture prevents ossification of the "primordial" cleavages, as witnessed by the smooth transition from a largely western-based Kravchuk administration to the administration of Leonid Kuchma, most of whose electorate were concentrated in the eastern-southern area.

The linguistic divide in itself is a constructed phenomenon, as it became significant no sooner than the development of print-capitalism and administrative standardization of vernaculars promoted certain languages as "official" languages of the state, simultaneously disadvantaging the others (Anderson, 1991: chap. 3). Competition between variously anchored "reading classes" immediately ensued, with not only ethnically different groups, but also bearers of the "standard" and "substandard" variants of the same language being pitched against each other. Since the "right" linguistic identity opened the road for social mobility and was virtually indispensable for a career in bureaucracy, language became a marker in social and political struggles. Linguistic differences acquired heretofore-unknown political significance.

Linguistic differences in Ukraine became politicized in a similar way, only exacerbated by the country's historical divisions and re-divisions by the neighboring powers, Russia and Poland in particular. In the former Soviet Union, Russian was the (unofficial)

language of the state, though Ukrainian was widely spoken by the "indigenous" bureaucracy of the Ukrainian SSR. Even before Ukraine proclaimed its independence, the republican Law on Languages elevated Ukrainian to the status of the official language of the state. The norm has been enshrined in the Art. 10 of the new Constitution of Ukraine, adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on 28 June 1996. All the regular outcomes expected from such a change in linguistic politics promptly appeared on scene. First, Russian was eschewed by the central bureaucracy and, consequently, by the central media and academia. Secondly, previously marginalized producers for the Ukrainian "reading class" made headlong careers to the top of the Ukrainian political establishment. Poets became ambassadors, journalists chaired newly formed political parties, and entertainers took their seats in the parliament. The campaign for "purification" of the Ukrainian language started in earnest, with heavy onslaught against the bearers of the substandard Ukrainian, the so-called "surzhik." Russophone intellectuals were left with a choice of either switching to Ukrainian in their familiar professional activities or accepting inevitable "ghettoization" on regional, social, or vocational grounds. All efforts were undertaken to further distance Ukrainian from Russian, by changing the alphabet, the rules of transliteration from foreign languages and the vocabulary itself. The diaspora Ukrainian, the Polonized Western Ukrainian dialects, the archaic Ukrainian, as reflected in the nineteenth-century publications, were all drawn upon extensively as presumably better sources for reconstruction of a "true, genuine" Ukrainian language than contemporary books or periodicals, to say nothing about the live speakers of the "endangered" language.

The reaction of the Ukrainian populace was best demonstrated by the support given to Leonid Kuchma, who did not speak much Ukrainian before his inauguration ceremony. Though making Russian the second official language was among the key points of his electoral platform, he never delivered on the promise. Nevertheless, the Ukrainization campaign somewhat lost its zeal, and administrations of several eastern oblasti were able to institute official bilingualism locally. With Ukrainian factually dominant in the western, northwestern and central regions of the country, and the constitutional guarantees to its development unequivocally laid out, the politics of language became a lesser issue than before. The fragmented nature of the Ukrainian polity facilitated what may be called a regional division of competence. This arrangement, in turn, showed its capacity to stabilize the divided society.

The case turns us back to consideration of an inherent political-cultural continuity underlying apparent diversity of the actual politics. As traditional Ukrainian elites had to be flexible in the face of foreign domination, the contemporary Ukrainian elite learns to accommodate various constituencies inside the country. Democracy and independence substituted former external regulators with the new internal ones. Since no successful politician can disregard the opinion of either Ukrainophone or Russophone parts of the electorate, all candidates to the government master the art of compromise. As a result, Ukraine managed to avoid repetition of the Russian mistakes. Crimean separatism has been contained by legal means, and the prolonged impasse in the executive-legislative relations (1995-96) was resolved without calling upon the army. What was perceived as an inescapable weakness of the Ukrainian polity, its divided and fragmented character[8], proved a source of strength and viability.

As a rejoinder to the ongoing debate on challenges to old and new democracies, the Ukrainian case indeed corroborates the idea that

> The phenomenon of fragmentation and identity politics inevitably finds expression in the democratic process; arguably, democracy and democratization even encourage fragmentation and identity politics. They can also lead to expressions of majoritarianism and resentment. (Inoguchi and Newman, 1996: 11)

Since the worst case scenario has not been played out in the newly democratic Ukrainian state, we have to look at safeguards that happened to be there to prevent this kind of development. It appears that fragmentation itself, if well embedded in the national political tradition, may facilitate mutual accommodation and compromise. Tyranny of the majority can be avoided, if the nation is fragmented in such a way that no clear majority comes out of this fragmentation. This is the case of Ukraine, which is divided roughly half in half between the West and the East, the Ukrainophones and the Russophones. No party can claim lasting superiority over the other.

It seems that, if a viable bipartisan system is ever to take root in Ukraine, it will be based on this "natural" (historical and ethnocultural) division between regions. The other cleavages are currently too weak or too unstable to play any significant role in party politics or political participation in general. As the society is still in flux, the political process

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[8]Cf. Theodore Friedgut's (1994) critical view of fragmentation as potentially harmful to genuine pluralism.

continues to be detached from any sound foundation in social and political structure. Class politics is simply absent, and even more noticeable, miners' strikes (see Marples, 1991) resemble dissatisfied consumers' revolts more than anything else. Mechanistic application of the "collective action" models generated in the West may not be very helpful, if we want to understand the true meaning of these manifestations.

Religious cleavages do not provide a basis for political articulation either. It is indicative that no more than five percent of the Ukrainian population claim their preference for Christian Democratic or other religious groups in politics (A Political Portrait of Ukraine 4 (1994): 43). A recent poll shows that 37.5 percent of the electorate do not belong to any confession, while another 16.2 percent cannot give a definite answer to the question (Politychnyi portret Ukrajiny 9 (1994): 33). The rest of the population is divided among five earlier-mentioned Christian churches and smaller denominations. This sheer multiplicity of religious groups prevents their consolidation on either an organizational or, even more so, a political basis. When consolidation or rapprochement does happen, as in the recent drawing-together of the UOC-KP and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, it happens along the fault lines of pro-Moscow or anti-Moscow orientation of the parties involved. Regional and ethnolinguistic loyalties outweigh other issues, as churches follow respectively framed power struggles that evolve in the Ukrainian political establishment.

According to some Ukrainian analysts, regionalism is even more important a factor than ethnic or linguistic affiliation. Thus,

> It has been noted that Russians living in Halychyna react to events and evaluate them according to samples dominating there. Ukrainians living in the eastern part and in Crimea reproduce the way of thoughts and actions widespread in these regions... Not ethnic membership, but involvement in and subordination to the general atmosphere has become a substantial circumstance, which considerably reduces the meaning of the ethnic factor. (Oksamytna and Makeev, 1995: 3).

The ethnic factor is further reduced by the imperfect correlation between ethnic Ukrainians and Ukrainophones, ethnic Russians and Russophones (Arel and Khmelko, 1996). It has been demonstrated more than once that Russified Ukrainians tend to side with ethnic Russians on many issues of political importance. Similarly, Ukrainianized Russians often exhibit all characteristics of the nationally conscious Ukrainians and sometimes even enter the ranks of the Ukrainian nationalist elite (Khvylovy, Shulhyn, Volobuiev, Yefremov et al.).

A diligent study of the problem shows that sociohistorical and cultural differences are more important than any of the so-called "primordial" or "natural" divisions.

The fragmented constitution of the Ukrainian polity deeply influences the political culture of the nation. While neither of the above noted cleavages are written in stone, some of them change so slowly that both current politics and its various interpretations will be better served if they regard those as features of historically lasting force and significance. Regionalism is an obvious leader in this category. One cannot avoid doubting the validity of the concept of national political culture, when it is applied to Ukraine. Could it not be better to discuss two political cultures, instead of one, thus taking into account the West-East split in political tradition and contemporary politics of the country? Though this would certainly be an option, the gap between the regions is not an insurmountable one. A number of unifying themes weave fragments of the Ukrainian polity together, making discussion of a singular Ukrainian political culture not only meaningful, but also mandatory in any study of the related subject matter. Deeply ingrained politics of accommodation is one of these underlying features, as it is a historically pre-programmed phenomenon, a functional derivative from a particular line of the Ukrainian national development. Loose cohesion among different parts of the body politic is another. Its nation-wide significance is demonstrated by the fact that fragmentation is not circumscribed by inter-regional relations, but affects intra-regional and subregional politics as well. Thus, for example, as late as May 1994 a nation-wide poll showed roughly equal figures of supporters and opponents of privatization of large enterprises in the Western Ukraine (30.6 percent vs. 30 percent, with 39.4 percent undecided). In the East, 20.4 percent of the respondents "completely approved" and 21.4 percent "completely disapproved" development of private entrepreneurship (A Political Portrait of Ukraine 5 (1995): 8-9). Regional discrepancies are clearly pronounced in the aggregate. However, internal fragmentation of the regions may show itself up in rather unexpected commonalities.

Survivalism and dependency

The historical absence of all-national authority and an intergenerational memory of past tragedies made Ukrainian people adjust their political and social behavior accordingly. Survival became an overarching goal, a preoccupation for both lower and upper strata of society. The latter learned to switch their allegiances quickly, should the situation press a

choice upon them. The former struggled to isolate themselves from an adversarial environment, tying most of their social interaction to parochial communities that, in the process, grew in self-sufficient local lifeworlds. Escape was another option, and the sheer numbers of the world-scattered Ukrainian diaspora witness to its long-lasting popularity. Finally, revolt was a choice of the dismayed, but it was also a form of political and economic entrepreneurship for underprivileged members of the upper class.

Survivalism contributed to individualist and localist trends in Ukrainian political culture. It necessitated low levels of trust in anything and anybody, with the sole exception of God. Even if the majority of the population severed formal connections to the Church, it is instructive to see how these, formally speaking, unbelievers in overwhelming numbers declare their confidence in God's wisdom in the most chaotic and mutually distrustful atmosphere of the postcommunist Ukraine (A Political Portrait of Ukraine 4 (1994): 49). Unstructured piety betrays survivalist doubt underneath. In a generally inhospitable environment, relying on one's own premises and praying to God that things will somehow work out by themselves is not an utterly illogical strategy.

As any behavioral strategy, survivalism is defined and modified by the available means and ways of action. In the pre-modern Ukrainian society, where this attitude originated, a commoner had access to the three mutually intersecting fields of practices: one structured by his or her individual (physical and mental) capacities, another centered on the family, and the last one revolving around the neighborhood/locality. The relative preponderance of one or two of these over the other created different strategies of getting along.

Self-centered individuals could build their life on readily available internal resources, on the inherited "capital" of one's body, mind and spirit. Whether they chose to invest this capital in farming, trade, war, travel, or family depended on a number of factors, not all of which were under their control. Thus, farmership was constantly disturbed by foreign invasions, local lords' rivalry and natural misfortunes. Creeping enserfment of the peasantry had finally eliminated this option from a register of freely chosen activities. Indigenous trade was severely harmed by continuous foreign control over the country. Self-reliant male commoners had to choose basically between the war-like occupation and the long trip abroad, where they could hope to find themselves successfully engaged in more peaceful activities.

Freelance warriors and bandits were responsible for the emergence of the Ukrainian Cossacks as a historical and cultural phenomenon. This voluntary association of freedom-loving individuals prefigured, in the opinion of many contemporary Ukrainian scholars, an early (16-17th centuries) beginning of the Ukrainian libertarian tradition (Shmorhun, 1994). We are forced to add, it could be also counted among the early manifestations of indigenous anarchism. Several Cossack wars and peasant rebellions of late medieval ages might easily be interpreted this way (see more in Hrushevsky, 1970; Ulianov, 1996). As anarchism represents nothing more but a certain radicalization of individualist principles, these two interpretations are not wholly incompatible.

Both Ukrainian individualism and anarchism were essentially survivalist strategies, developed within the first of the above noted fields of available cultural practices – the ego-centered one. The "family field" excluded many, if not most, of the choices open to the self-reliant male individual. Of course, Cossacks had families, too. Their family allegiances, however, simply restricted the range of the activities at their disposal. They did not organize or structure those activities. The principal war-making activities of the Cossacks were not devised inside the family field of practices. The instruments of action that the family orientation gave to a commoner were better suited for more peaceful purposes, most notably agricultural activities, child-rearing, and local trade.

Ukrainian family communes were drastically different from their land-equalizing Russian counterparts. As noted by a historian,

> … by the last part of the eighteenth century most peasant households were the permanent possessors of their holdings. At this point the Little Russian [that is, Ukrainian – M. M.] experience diverged from that of the North. Instead of going back to communal control and equalization … individual landholding persisted. Each homestead continued in the possession of its specific holding, and no communal efforts were made to achieve equality in the amount of the land held, or to provide landless peasants with holdings. (Blum, 1968: 522-23)

The original source of the famous "peasant individualism" of the Ukrainian people is, probably, to be found there. Its political significance was demonstrated in full strength with the advent of collectivization. After the defeat of Antonov's peasant uprising in Tambov and Voronezh gubernia (1920-21), the Soviets could not meet a more powerful opponent to their agricultural policies than the Ukrainian farmers. Both economic and political-cultural factors contributed to the fact that

> Resistance to collectivization was naturally strongest among those who had the most to lose – the kulaks … and the bulk of the peasants in the surplus-producing areas of the Ukraine, southern Russia, and western Siberia, where landlordism and the village commune had been much weaker. (Daniels, 1985: 169)

Thus, peaceful family orientation and relative self-isolation of "peasant individualism" could generate quite militant behavior, if threatened from outside. However, even these sporadic outbursts should be regarded as just another, though extreme, case of survivalist activities.

Finally, the neighborhood-oriented field of social interaction yielded what can be named localist strategies of survival and Ukrainian localism in general as a political-cultural phenomenon of standing significance. In comparative terms, Ukrainian localism, or parochialism, is little different from other national manifestations of the same phenomenon. As anywhere else, it worked against state centralization, bureaucratic normalization and "rationalization" of social practices, hindered the spread of a unified (imperial?) culture, and currently stands as a last barrier against cosmopolitan tendencies of sweeping globalization.[9] For Ukrainians, just as for other foreign-dominated people, localist closure created a more or less reliable interface in dealing with external authorities, a kind of a dike against the tide of national and social oppression. Unfortunately, it also restricted mobility of the people, fostering a complex of dependency upon the immediate social surroundings. This complex of dependency is still evident in contemporary political culture of the postcommunist Ukraine. Paradoxically, it coexists with manifestations of unbridled individualism and anarchist rejections of any political authority, be it the government, the opposition or the nascent political parties. It feeds into otherwise vastly different phenomena, such as neo-communism, regionalism, corporatism, or nationalism. Multiple dependency is a single most powerful factor determining the current state of Ukrainian polity and society. It is variously attributed to (a) communist legacies, (b) colonial policies of formerly dominating powers, (c) economic ineptitude of the postcommunist rulers, or (d) underdevelopment of viable market mechanisms inside the country. It is clear that all of these causes are pertinent to the problem. However, a culturalist analysis of its roots shows that Ukrainian localism, as a well-ingrained strategy of survival, should also be counted among the main contributors to the current state of affairs.

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[9]The world-wide contradiction between "parochial" and "global" cultures draws growing attention of the scholars. For lucid presentations of the problem, see Pye (1990) or Barber (1995).

Personal and social dependency is a flip side of parochialism. Medieval parochialism in Ukraine was revived with introduction of the "second serfdom," which similarly delayed development of other Eastern and East-Central European countries (Chirot, 1989). After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Stalinist command economy purged labour motivation of the remaining vestiges of private initiative, thus adding new dimensions to the inherited patterns of dependency. As one Ukrainian analyst noted, this was tantamount to the "third enserfment," which "institutionally and typologically was fully identical to its medieval counterparts" (Politychnyi portret Ukrajiny 7 (1994): 4). After the end of communism, a political culture of multiple dependency persisted, thwarting the progress of economic reforms on both elite and mass levels of the society. On the elite level, it showed up in "nomenklatura privatization" and rent-seeking behaviour of those power holders who thought they were best served by the existing paternalist state. On the mass level, no more than 25 percent of the Ukrainian population declared their readiness to take responsibility for one's own well-being; the rest expected the state to solve all the problems (Politychnyi portret Ukrajiny 7 (1994): 34).

Dependency on the paternalist state is one of the predominant manifestations of this attitude. It is most vividly expressed in the eastern and central regions of the country, where new parties of the left orientation have their main electoral bases. If a poll shows an average 79 percent of approval to the idea that the state "must provide for material well-being of the people," the figure is 7 percent higher for Donetsk and Lugansk oblasti and 3 to 5 percent higher for the central oblasti from Zhytomyr to Poltava and from Chernihiv to Kirovograd (Politychnyi portret Ukrajiny 5 (1993): 15, table 1). Yet, even in the reform-minded Kyiv, where only 6 percent of the polled supported Socialists and Communists in March 1995, the majority holds that the state should protect its citizens from economic hardships (Politychnyi portret Ukrajiny 12 (1995): 58).

However, as the state continues to fail its citizens, dependency finds new poles of attachment. Progressive devolution of the central authority brings regional interests to the fore. Regionalism provides a natural ground for competition for scarce resources of the state. The political infrastructure, which is necessary to compete successfully, is already there: the nationalists versus socialists divide in Ukraine is essentially a feature of political geography. Regionally based power groups ("clans," in a word borrowed from the Ukrainian political

discourse[10]) determine direction and shape of the postcommunist realignment of political and economic forces, while fledgling parties can offer little more than symbolic representation of interests. The parties' relationship to the regional "clans" is best described as financial dependency: in the impoverished economy, no one can afford to rely on membership dues only. Parties have to go where money can still be found, that is, to the directors of local enterprises, industrial and financial groups based in the area; finally, to provincial governments and local administrations that may be willing to "help out" their fellow-countrymen with more or less open donations and indirect subsidies. On the other side, politically disengaged folk learn to adjust traditional schemes of localist dependency to regional patterns of distribution. Mass support to Crimean Russian "separatism" and Carpatho-Rusyn "autonomism" are, from this point of view, identical in their etiology: both represent substitution of regional power bases for the paternalist state that failed expectations of its clients.

A continuing implosion of the state brings new forms of social and political fragmentation on the top of the old ones. Regional division of the Ukrainian lands, though taking on completely new meaning after the collapse of communism (just as it did when the Soviet regime was extended to most of the Ukrainian ethnodemographic territory), develops within the established pattern. Competition among industries and sectors of the economy, each vying for privileged access to regulators and sponsors in the government is, on the other hand, a comparatively recent development. Industrial and sectional division of power in the postcommunist Ukraine and lingering dependency of all medium and large-size businesses on the state creates a fruitful ground for corporatist mediation of interests.

Starting in the mid-eighties, the concept of corporatism, or neo-corporatism, has been increasingly applied to the analysis of the state socialist societies (Bunce and Echols, 1980; Brown, 1983; Hough, 1983). The corporatist framework appeared well-suited to those patterns of interest mediation and negotiation under socialism that could not be explained by former totalitarian models. Using pluralist methodology in studies of the state-dominated society seemed an obvious conceptual overstretch. Corporatism was taken aboard as a compromise solution, in order to indicate that some group bargaining was going on with the state and, under the state's tight supervision, among the groups and institutions. It is in this

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[10]See M. Mykhalchenko, "Vijna za Kyiv: tochka zoru," Vechirnii Kyiv, 13.07.96, p. 4.

capacity that the concept should have inevitably reappeared in the postcommunist context (Teague, 1994; Kubicek, 1996; Molchanov, 1996b).

The postcommunist society is bound to be corporatist, or quasi-corporatist, because of remaining ties between interest groups and the state. However, its newly emerging features, no less than those inherited from the ancien régime, promote state-corporatist solutions to the problems of a transition period. Thus, corporatist policies "may ... help to resolve possible conflicts between an emerging capital-based élite and labour." (Kubicek, 1996: 31). Even more importantly, they may defuse potentially dangerous conflicts on the stage of initial property rights' (re)allocation. The postcommunist state legitimizes rapid enrichment of some groups and individuals, denying their potential competitors the same opportunity to take part in privatization and denationalization of property. It tries to keep social unrest to a minimum by giving loser's payoff to an active part of the subject population, and simultaneously excludes less mobilized groups from consideration. Arguably, it attempts to manage the transition from socialism to capitalism in an "orderly manner" by appointing new capitalists from its own ranks and selectively admitting "new rich" to the positions of power. The rest of the population is ideologically destined to become "labour masses" in service of the new proprietors, which, after all, is not that dissimilar to their former "predestination" under the old communist regime.[11]

Postcommunist corporatism in Ukraine fully conforms to this picture. "What is particularly noteworthy," writes Paul Kubicek (1996: 34), "is how labour is virtually completely by-passed on long-term questions such as privatization and structural reform. The marginalisation of labour is an important political achievement, especially if one remembers the importance of labour unrest in the Soviet Union in 1989-91." The Ukrainian government managed to disenfranchise the labour movement politically by accepting wage demands from the most active unions under the condition that broader political issues should be removed from the agenda. As a result, not only has the labour movement been segmented into privileged and underprivileged groups, but also the whole labour opposition to the government has largely lost its political zeal. The reverse side of this achievement was renewed and deepened dependency of Ukrainian labour on the state, and complementary dependency on peak professional associations and unions for access to the state's distribution

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[11] For an interesting discussion of related issues see Gaidar, 1995.

bodies.

On the other side of a corporatist triad, the state and private sector's employers, formally represented by such groups as the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (USPP), the Union of Independent Entrepreneurs, or the Union of Small Entrepreneurs, have also failed to achieve even that minimal degree of independence from the government that conditioned the Latin American or the Southern European (before democratization) practices of corporatist intermediation. Needless to say, the Ukrainian experience is simply inexplicable in terms of the very different Western European models of concerted "attribution of public status" to the existing, independently formed interest groups (Offe, 1981). Postcommunist states do not simply "recognize or license" (Schmitter and Lehmbruch, 1979: 13) spontaneously emerging business associations; they create new capitalist groups where there were none, uncannily repeating their direct predecessors' attempt to build previously unseen social structures by administrative fiat. The Ukrainian state is no exception. However, in the Ukrainian case, corporatist dependency on the state and the state-licensed industrial representation bodies is further enforced by the national tradition of localist dependency and by survivalist patterns of behaviour, originating from the times before and immediately after the formation of the ethnic core of the Ukrainian nation. These features of the ingrained political culture may help explain, why the state-corporatist system, basically the same in its inner mechanisms, when used to manage structurally analogous situations of the postcommunist transformations in Russia and Ukraine, has yielded such vastly different outcomes: a "revolutionary" redefinition of property rights in the case of Russia and a creeping stagnation of ill-defined "social peace" in the case of Ukraine (cf. Kubicek, 1996).

Nationalism

The political culture of dependency may have contributed to the phenomenon of the Ukrainian nationalism. Generally speaking, Ukrainian nationalism is not that different from other nationalisms around the globe. Its origins are also rather recent; romanticism and modernization have had direct impact on maturation of would-be nationalist elites in Ukraine. Ukrainian nationalism was also initiated by "professionals of the pen," and its first audience was limited to the respective "reading classes" (Anderson, 1991). Both print-capitalism and indigenization of the state bureaucracies were as necessary for its

development as they were for the development of other national movements elsewhere. Three stages of nationalist mobilization, noted in Hroch's study of the Central and Eastern European countries (1985), were undoubtedly present in the Ukrainian case, too.

Yet, there were also specific features, which may be addressed in more detail. The dependent nature of Ukrainian nationalism is one of them. Ukrainian nationalism was a secondary, if not tertiary, phenomenon in European cultural and intellectual development. The elite phase of nationalist mobilization was greatly shaped by conscious and unconscious borrowing of the relevant cultural codes from other European nations. Those who stood at the beginning of Ukrainian nationalism – the historian Kostomarov, the novelist and historian Kulish, and the poet Shevchenko – could learn from the Poles, Czechs and Germans, whose national-minded elites were by then well engaged in the process of historical myth-making and nationalist reconstruction of their countries' "true" cultural inheritance. Liberal thought in the Russian Empire, though not nationalist at the moment, infused the forefathers of the Ukrainian nationalism with modified Slavophilism and relatively unstructured libertarian longings. The "official nationalism" of the Russian imperial state (Anderson, 1991), which came into existence as a reaction to Napoleonic wars and the Polish uprising of 1830, created an intellectual climate that sharpened the sense of national awareness of all, and not only Russian, members of educated classes of the Empire (Pelech, 1993). Ukrainian nationalism followed in the wake of these developments, and only gradually shaped its political programme as a programme of fully independent national statehood. By all accounts, this was a particular example of "learning by doing," when deliberate copying from "comrades-in-arms" (nationalist elites in other European countries) and mirroring the direct adversaries (e. g., champions of the Polish or the Russian cause in the Ukrainian lands) strengthened the young movement and gave it its final direction. From this perspective, even the fact of Ukraine's division between neighboring states may be regarded as instrumental to the rise of the Ukrainian nationalist movement:

> Polish influence in nearly half of Ukrainian ethnic territory served as a counterbalance to Russian domination. Throughout the nineteenth century the western part of Ukraine remained a zone of tension, where Russian and Polish forces competed for supremacy. In the long run, this strengthened Ukrainian self-awareness as a nation distinct from both Poland and Russia. (Rudnytsky, 1987: 22)

So the oft-cited Ukrainian "negative identity" started to take shape, as the first task of

nationalist intellectuals appeared to be proving Ukrainian distinctiveness from both the Russians and the Poles.

The Ukrainian movement entered the stage of patriotic agitation, or what M. Hroch calls Phase B, distinguished by formulation and advancement of a comprehensive linguistic programme (Hroch, 1992), not earlier than the 1860s. Even then, it was mostly limited to Galicia, which at the time enjoyed a certain level of toleration of these activities by the Habsburg Empire. The Russian government, on the contrary, chose to step up its administrative pressure on the Ukrainian "separatists," prompting a number of important figures to join forces with their western compatriots. The net result of this phase was political and cultural "Galicianization" of the Ukrainian national movement, gradual loss of previously potent pro-Russian sympathies among its champions and further deepening of the gap between the nationalist "avant-garde" in the West and the mass of potential recipients of their message in the "Little Russian" East. The ensuing marginalization of Ukrainian nationalist propaganda could not be overcome till the end of the century, when newly radicalized groups of intellectuals in both eastern and western Ukraine had managed to successfully repeat the "agitation" stage of the movement and to lay the ground for subsequent national mobilization efforts.

The support given to the Ukrainian national cause in elections to the pre-revolutionary Russian Duma and especially during the 1917-20 period of the Civil War in Ukraine may indicate the beginnings of the final stage of mass mobilization (cf. Rudnytsky, 1987: 30, 35n). However, it was cut short by the military and political success of the Bolsheviks in the industrialized eastern areas of the country. The Polish government took an opportunity to simultaneously suppress separatist movement in the western Ukraine. Subsequent development of various forms of the Ukrainian nationalism – national communism in the Soviet Ukraine and the so-called "integral" (fascistic) nationalism in the West – failed to enlist masses in support of their cause. State repression can only partially account for this lack of interest. More important was the fact that by that time social concerns had already prevailed over the romanticized nation-building visions. Many of the Soviet Ukrainians sincerely partook in the "socialist construction" efforts and shared the ideological doctrines of communism. The Communist Party of the Western Ukraine (KPZU) followed the trend. The problems of day-to-day survival occupied the disenfranchised masses on both sides. Class divisions in Galicia and Volyn' under the Polish domination were too obvious

for the propaganda of a "single, indivisible" Ukrainian nation to be more than marginally successful. All of this had predetermined the ultimate victory of the Soviets in all of the Ukraine. Recording this victory as a mere case of military occupation, as is done by most Ukrainian nationalist historians, would be a gross oversimplification, if not a deliberate distortion of the historical facts.

As indicated by several researchers of the problem (Krawchenko, 1985; Suny, 1993; Ulianov, 1996), contemporary nationalism in Ukraine has been as much a creation of the local Soviet administration as of the indigenous nationalist movement, largely confined within the borders of historic Galicia and Volyn'. Here, as elsewhere, local bureaucrats in service of the "empire" supplied the first cadres of the would-be nationalist leadership (cf. Anderson, 1991). The case of Kravchuk's magical reincarnation from communist ideological chief in charge of fighting "bourgeois nationalism" in Ukraine to the most ardent proponent of the latter is particularly illuminating (more on this in Motyl, 1993). His Russophone successor Kuchma, though avoiding the extremes of nationalist propaganda, actually continued Kravchuk's policy of gradual Ukrainization of political and cultural life in the country. Parallels to postcolonial leaders in Africa, who also barely spoke indigenous languages, being educated, trained and often promoted to their first public offices by the Westerners, are not accidental. In all of these cases, political power had to be wrested and justified on a platform of ethnonational revival for the simple reason that ethnicity appeared the only unbeatable argument in competition with better educated, deeper entrenched and generally more powerful groups of locally based "imperialist" elites.

The same logic applies to the analysis of another important group of postcommunist nationalist leaders – those who constituted the contemporary analogue to the nineteenth-century "pen elite," making their living through the professional use of vernacular. Understandably, they were intimately interested in broadening the sphere of their pursuit and elevating its status by making vernacular the required language for all professional activities in the country. Most of the Ukrainian dissidents in the late years of the Soviet regime – Chornovil, Lukianenko, the Horyn' brothers, Sverstiuk, Badzio, Dziuba et al. – belong to this category. In 1989-91, they were joined by some of the former mainstream Ukrainian Soviet poets and writers, who sponsored the first nationalist organization in late-perestroika Ukraine – the Rukh (see Kuzio and Wilson, 1994). For this group of people, and also according to the generally established rule, "the move from cultural to political nationalism was

occasioned by blocked social mobility" (Hall, 1993: 11). By "blocked social mobility," in this instance, we should understand both the rather narrow confines of the Ukrainian "reading class," as it existed at the moment, and the writers' inability or unwillingness to reach a wider audience. Nationalism presented itself as a convenient status-making tool, often elevating a mediocre literary figure to the scarcely dreamt-of height of a popular leader and defender of a "common cause." If taken by the state and implemented in the state policies, nationalism promised forceful broadening of the heretofore-limited audience and guaranteed its mobilized attention.

The political culture of dependency on the powers-that-be showed full strength and renewed vigor after the end of communism. Previous attempts at mass nationalist mobilization in Ukraine failed for no other reason than the state at the moment was less than supportive of these attempts (Russia, Austria, Poland) or too weak and limited in its authority to back them with sustained organizational effort (Ukrainian People's Republic, Ukrainian Soviet government in the 1930s and later under Shelest). Now, when the state bureaucracy took full charge of nationalist re-education of the "Russified" Ukrainians, the Ukrainian movement finally proceeded to its last stage of long delayed mass mobilization. The regionally fragmented nature of the Ukrainian polity predetermined only partial success of mobilizationist efforts in the West and widespread indifference, if not opposition, in the East and the South. The state had to steer a precarious course between regional interests, simultaneously defending its independence against renewed attempts at domination, emanating from the postcommunist Russian government. The political culture of accommodation forestalled relying on exclusionist "integral" nationalism, which could alienate vast segments of population. However, some ideological barrier against the reintegrationist impulses from the east was necessary. A new form of ethno-civic nationalism eventually took shape, as a sort of compromise between the demands of independent state- and nation building and the objective reality of a divided nation.

Ukraine continues to be a "nationalizing" state (Brubaker, 1995), as the Ukrainian language is given definite priority in practices of the government, mass media, culture and education. It is enshrined as the state language in the Ukrainian Constitution and the Law on Languages. Ukrainian history is being systematically purged of its "Russianized" interpretations and rewritten, according to the new canon. Ukrainian orthography has been remodeled with the help of the diaspora "experts." The educational system is thoroughly

Ukrainianized on elementary, high school and university levels – everywhere, where the local population either demands it or peacefully accepts it.

At the same time, the central Ukrainian government delegates extensive rights to local administrations. This policy helps ethnic minorities, especially the Russian "super-minority," to realize its cultural potential in full (Regional'na polityka Ukrajiny, 1995). Thus, as late as 1996, 93% of all radio and television programmes in Crimea were broadcast in Russian; there was only one Ukrainian and one Crimean-Tatar school among almost 300 schools of the autonomy (Viktorov, 1996: 8). In 1996-97, legislators in Kharkiv and Donetsk oblasti voted Russian as the second official language within their respective spheres of jurisdiction (OMRI Daily Digest, 24 March 1997). The press in Russian dominates eastern and southern areas of the country, just as publications in Ukrainian prevail in its western and central oblasti. All of this adds credibility to a statement by a local observer:

> A new state appeared on the territory of the former UkrSSR. Though motley in its national composition, it may be said to incorporate two state-forming nations: the Ukrainians and the Russians. If we are willing to take into account historical development and today's national situation, the new state should be built on a binational platform, which will have to preclude also any discrimination against other national minorities. (Pavlov, 1996: 2).

If it ever happens, we will have to modify the argument about peculiar "ethno-civic" brand of nationalism and its central place in state-building strategies of the Ukrainian government. However, the Ukrainian ethnization of the national polity can hardly be avoided at the moment. The reason is simple and emphasized more than once: Ukraine lacks civil society, and, consequently, lacks a developed sense of citizenship that would be shared by all of its inhabitants. Territorial attachment is present; however, it is regionally defined. Political and cultural cohesion inside the Ukrainian polity is weak, and the bonds of solidarity are underdeveloped on all levels of the society. In other words, not only the all-national, civic identity is largely absent at the moment, but even the national profiles of the above-mentioned "state-forming nations" are still opaque and moot. Historical fragmentation of the Ukrainian polity and society did not stop at the regional level; it went deeper than that. Communism added totalitarian atomisation on the top of already existent problems. The postcommunist "free-for-all" mentality justified naked egotism as an expected strategy of adjustment to what was understood as imperatives of the coming market environment.

Due to these developments, a "pillarized," consociational (Lijphart, 1968) democracy

in Ukraine, though intensely desired, is barely possible now. Attempts to make a nation on the basis of the predominant ethnicity are bound to continue. The relatively mild and cautious character of these attempts witnesses to both the inescapable reality of the divided nation and its historically fragmented and inconsistent, but immensely flexible political culture. The Ukrainian state is neither ethnic nor fully civic in its nationalizing efforts. Pushing it along the first path would be suicidal in the country where even the ethnic identity of the titular nation is split in two almost equipotent mediums. On the other hand, taking the path of purely political, civic nation-building is not feasible, because of the absence of unifying components and ties, usually supplied by civil society. Since civil society is absent, neither consociational, nor modern corporatist mediation among major constituencies can be employed successfully.

Conclusion

It may be argued that the very concept of Ukrainian political culture is self-assuming, as Ukrainians did not know any prolonged periods of fully independent state existence prior to 1991. One hundred years of Hetmanate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries supposedly cannot undermine this observation, since the country was, formally speaking, under the authority of the Russian czars. If under the category of political culture we were to understand only the established patterns of state action, the critique would seem valid. Even then, though, it could be riposted in a sense that nothing comes from nothing, and the arsenal of available means and schemes of political action for the independent Ukrainian state was largely created before it came into existence. However, much more important, in my view, is to acknowledge that political culture is neither something inherently good by definition,[12] nor something necessarily connected to the apparatuses of the state. Today, we do not have to explain in much detail that the realm of politics is wider than the realm of the state: this is common-sense knowledge. Not everyone would agree, however, that the same logic should guide our understanding of the so-called stateless nations and nations-in-the-making. There, also, politics could be conducted on other levels. Ukraine is but one case in point. Though lacking their own state, Ukrainians nevertheless lived in political space

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[12]This interpretation is widespread among the Ukrainian theorists of both Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Its roots are to be found, surprisingly, in neo-Kantian axiology, according to which "culture" was understood as a sum of positive values. See Nadolnyi, 1984; Golovakha et al., 1993: 124-29.

dominated by other state formations. Their day-to-day lives were saturated with directly and indirectly political relations of power and authority, survival and accommodation. The proprietary classes in Ukraine were always in constant communication with those who ruled the land from afar or exercised other forms of domination over its people. The lower classes had to take into account the ongoing power relations, since those eventually targeted common folk as a revenue source for the power holders. Both mass and elite political cultures gradually emerged as more or less systemic patterns of collective action that incorporated once-found ad hoc solutions and templates of successful political behaviour.

Not only man-made material of this kind entered the picture. Political culture is a complex entity; it reflects circumstances of the action together with action patterns and conscious designs. It has its own structure of opportunities and threats, and may be regarded as a resource or constraint on the evolving practices, depending on the perspective. Thus, fragmentation of the Ukrainian polity was reflected in the Ukrainian political culture. First, the latter had to develop in regionally defined "submodules." Second, each of these submodules became internally fragmented, admitting "non-systemic" diversity in the pool of customary ways of action it represented. Ukrainian political culture, from the very beginning, developed as an amalgam of often-inconsistent themes and stories. Inconsistency, however, did not run inside these stories: it was manifested only as their external relation to each other. The Russian political culture, as we could see earlier, though more holistic on the surface, has also been fundamentally contradictory in its basic structure.

We have argued that Ukrainian political culture is a culture of dependency and accommodation. Clearly, neither the first nor the second feature is uniquely Ukrainian. However, the explanatory value they have in the Ukrainian context outweighs, in my view, the Almondian scheme of subject – participant – civic culture progression. The political culture of the postcommunist Ukraine is neither subject nor civic. It combines some participatory elements with new forms of dependency on redistributing state, regional "clans," ethnolinguistic communes and corporate entities. To say that it should be regarded as a simple continuation of the Soviet-style "subject-participatory" (DiFranceisco and Gitelman, 1984) model is to neglect important advances in individual freedom and new forms of participation beyond the realm of the state that arose after the collapse of communism. Elsewhere, I have attempted to coin the label of a "corporatist-participatory" type of political culture, applying it to both postcommunist Russia and Ukraine (Molchanov,

1996b). Though I still believe in its usefulness with regard to both late Soviet and early post-Soviet periods, it becomes increasingly evident that a strong sense of corporate solidarity has not yet taken root in all segments of the societies in question. Especially for Ukraine, the culture of individual survivalism and accommodation prevails on the mass level over the potentially fruitful corporatist ways of collective bargaining. Some immature corporatism characterizes the political culture of the nascent political and business elites. However, their corporatism is usually presented in hardly appropriate nationalistic or socialistic clothing, which hampers the normal development of interest associations and obstructs effective intermediation between them.

One final word on Ukrainian nationalism. As an elite construction, it hardly repersents the "primordial longing of the oppressed masses." In the long row of European model and modular nationalisms (see Anderson, 1991), Ukrainian nationalism belongs closer to the end. As a state platform, it has made a relatively recent appearance in the Revolution of 1917. As a program for national risorgimento, it repeatedly failed to enlist mass support necessary for the transition to M. Hroch's (1985) Phase C of the movement. Only when postcommunist nomenklatura, who had inherited the state by default, decided to jump on the nationalist bandwagon, could the stage of the mass mobilization start in earnest. Six years later it appears that, even with state support, mass response is less than overwhelming.

Ukrainian society, at the moment, remains regionally and corporately fragmented, ethnolinguistically divided, and dependent on exogenous powers – be it an authoritative paternalist state of its own, Russia, the CIS, Ukrainian diaspora, Western powers, or the international community in general. In their preoccupation with stability and survival, both Ukrainian rulers and Ukrainian people contribute to the lack of decisive political action or vision for the future. The "Ukrainian way" in the economy proved stillborn, but seems satisfactory to those who prefer the social peace of stagnation to inescapable threats of economic restructuring (see Zviglianich, 1993). Ethnonationalism failed to unify the nation, but is still moderately encouraged by the state. On the other side, the large Russophone community remains unacknowledged as a second "state-forming nation," but has enough room for initiative in the places of its compact settlement. All in all, the political culture of accommodation has largely stalled development, but effectively prevented violent conflicts inside the country. Whether or not it may be equally successful in cross-cultural negotiations with Ukraine's eastern neighbour, we attempt to answer in the next chapter.

Chapter 6. ATTEMPTING A DIALOGUE: CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS

The preceding analysis has shown that, despite easily registered similarities between Russian and Ukrainian political cultures, they differ from each other in several important and still less than adequately studied features. Similarities occur in sociological surveys of public opinion on the matters believed to be indicative of political culture of the people. Among those, levels of social trust, readiness to defend one's personal rights and use them legally, support for democracy and private initiative, preferences to a larger or smaller role of the government in the affairs of society are the most commonly-used indicators. A host of surveys using these or comparable measurements established that Russian and Ukrainian responses to standardized questionnaires differed little, which was clearly not the case with, for example, Lithuanians (see Reisinger et al, 1994). The evidence apparently pushed in the direction of a single culture hypothesis, denying both the Russians and the Ukrainians their cultural specificity.

One or two cultures?

Without raising narrower questions on methodology (e.g. on the necessity to compensate for demographic underrepresentation of politically important Western Ukraine by some way of quota sampling), I would defend the two cultures hypothesis with a broad historical interpretation. Polls and surveys cannot fathom the full depth of historical memory of a nation. They cannot go beyond statistical aggregation of individual responses to the matters of today's significance. Methodological tools they use are unable to present political culture as a synthetic, holistic quality of lasting import. Most surveys are not much concerned about the difference between values, on the one hand, and opinions, on the other, and they usually privilege "one form of behaviour (opinions as verbal behaviour) ... over both non-verbal behaviour and subjective views" (Fleron, Jr., 1996: 236). All efforts to reach political culture through the medium of individual rationality of a statistically selected respondent are bound to produce pictures of a limited temporal and cultural horizon; such pictures are distorted by individual circumstances and fears of the respondent, and biased according to the prevalent mood of the day.

Similarities between Ukrainian and Russian responses obtained during the 1988-92

interviews may betray the profound impact their common Soviet past had on these peoples. To the extent the answers reflected norms and values of internalized political culture, it was the political culture of the Soviet period that should have figured most prominently. No wonder: Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians formed the Eastern Slavic mainstay of the former Soviet Union and constituted a clear majority in the Communist party. The system relied on these peoples more than on any other. Consequently, they bore the heaviest burden of the regime's denationalization and Sovietization policies. The earlier, distinctive features in the historically inherited political culture and national mentality, though not wholly erased by these policies, were buried under the mountains of Stalinist terror and communist propaganda. The transient qualities of the "new Soviet man" formed day-to-day official personae, routinely displayed to colleagues and authorities. These surface features and long-practiced "ought" reactions were naturally the first to be elicited in a poll or interview situation.

Russian and Ukrainian histories are not identical, and their political cultures cannot be identical either. Russians were an empire-building nation when Ukrainians still struggled with the problem of their ethnopolitical identity. Leaving Kievan Rus' aside, Russians have had a fully independent state of their own at least since 1480, while the phenomenon of Ukrainian statehood, properly speaking, belongs to the twentieth century. The limited autonomy of the Cossack Hetmanate falls well short of any sustained notion of the state sovereignty. Russians incessantly expanded territories of their settlement, while the Ukrainian ethnic lands were continuously divided, redivided and appropriated by the neighbouring states. Russians were developmental authoritarians, when Ukrainians were survivalists. Russians made revolutions; Ukrainians attempted to pursue strategies of accommodation. When they were partners, Russians usually had the upper hand. When they fought each other, Russians usually (though not always) won.

The two peoples' relationship was complex and asymmetrical. Their linguistic and ethnodemographic closeness, common origin and densely intertwined histories throw differences in political cultures into even sharper relief. Of course, there are genuine similarities, too. However, the postcommunist history of Russian-Ukrainian relations demonstrates mostly distinct approaches to various international, regional and bilateral issues that engage politicians of both countries. Mass consciousness differs, too: when questioned

on their attitudes toward possible reintegration with Russia, Ukrainians regularly exhibit far less enthusiasm than Russians or Belorussians.[1]

Various explanations of differences between political cultures of the two peoples have been offered. Ukrainian nationalist historians trace these differences to nothing less than millennial traditions of peasant individualism and Cossack democracy, on the Ukrainian side, versus despotism and servility, on the Russian side (cf. Rudnytsky, 1987). Not a fully unsubstantiated Russian nationalist counter-argument finds a cue in what is seen as a history of subversive activities, orchestrated by foreign enemies of Ukrainian-Russian friendship (Ulianov, 1996). Mainstream analysts study changes in articulation of social and political forces under the impact of cultural modernization of the last two centuries. The Ukrainian movement, for them, is quite a recent, but domestically-rooted phenomenon. New national identity is interpreted as both consciously projected outcome and unforeseen by-product of modern national mobilizations.

For these or other reasons, Ukrainian politics presently exists beyond the reach of the authorities in Moscow. Whether it is bound to stay this way, we do not know, and no available tools of political analysis may ascertain it. The important thing is, seven years and two presidential administrations after the proclamation of independence, Ukraine has not moved a step closer to what the Russian vision of Ukraine's proper geopolitical and international position has been all these years. Even with the conclusion of a long-awaited comprehensive bilateral Treaty on friendship and cooperation (31 May 1997), Ukraine retained a unique and sometimes less than flexible, from Moscow's point of view, perspective on most significant issues in mutual and international relations.

Taking Ukraine seriously

This raises the problem of an international dialogue that was all but absent in Moscow's attitude toward Kiev since the last great purge of the Ukrainian politicians and intellectuals during the notorious "decade of terror" in the Stalinist Soviet Union (see

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[1] For the Ukrainian data, see periodical bulletins of a Kyiv-based research centre Democratic Initiatives, e.g., A Political Portrait of Ukraine 4 (1994): 41, A Political Portrait of Ukraine 5 (1995): 10, 22, etc. More optimistic assessment of the Ukrainian readiness to reintegrate is given by V. Malinkovich (1996). Comparable Russian data is available from a variety of polling agencies, including, among the better known, VTsIOM and Vox Populi.

Kostiuk, 1960). At that time, Stalin had solved the Ukrainian problem in his usual way: by denying its very existence and eliminating those who were live witnesses to the contrary. In the Stalinist problem-solving kit, reclassification and ideological obfuscation were among the most important and frequently used tools. Hence, ethnonational concerns of the Ukrainian political and cultural leaders were interpreted as signs of class revisionism and anti-socialism. It was not hard, then, to cast the Ukrainian national communists and predominantly populist intelligentsia as "enemies of the people" with all the consequences this designation entailed.

After that, and until the first presidential elections in the still Soviet republics of Russia and Ukraine, the Moscow-Kiev dialogue had never involved the national interests of either side. It was a dialogue between bureaucracies, not peoples. Needless to say, the participant bureaucracies lacked any popular mandate to represent their respective constituencies. Inter- and intraorganizational forms of dialogue were upheld, because the central administration in Moscow required some feedback for its controlling and monitoring activities. Nationality, however, was seldom invoked as an issue. When it was, the initiative conventionally resided with Kremlin, and almost never with Ukrainian authorities. For all practical purposes, Ukraine, in the eyes of the Moscow bureaucracy, was a department, though a big one, of the vast centralized corporation. Some idea of territorial separateness of the Ukrainian "periphery" and, hence, the necessity of local managerial hierarchy, clearly existed. As for the ideas of the national incongruence between the Ukrainian and the Russian "departments," and the necessity of international understanding and dialogue, the erstwhile "centre" was hardly capable of entertaining them. Gorbachev's "new political thinking" did not change much in this respect; it was also ill-suited to deal with the national multitude of the country.

The first Russian politician who started taking Ukraine seriously was Boris Yeltsin. Ukrainian independence and dissolution of the Soviet Union meant, for Yeltsin's circle, also Russian independence from obsolete "central" bureaucracy. Russia had a stake in Ukraine's struggle against the "centre," just as Ukraine depended on Russia for its success. Ukrainian exit sealed the fate of the Soviet Union and replaced the old communist regime in Moscow with a new regime of state-promulgated corporatism. Yeltsin's personal victory over

Gorbachev was, in this sense, sponsored by none other than Leonid Kravchuk.[2] One-time help, however, is a poor platform for lasting relationships between neighbours. Once the "centre" was gone and celebrations subsided, all the old problems in the Russian-Ukrainian field of politics predictably appeared anew. This time, they were problems of international stature and had to be tackled accordingly.

As former Ukrainian prime minister Vitalii Masol has argued, dissolution of the Soviet Union was an assured recipe to inflict economic disaster on its constituent republics (Masol, 1993). If Estonia and Latvia were spared this fate due to their small size, active Western investment and financial aid that helped to keep economies afloat, neither Ukraine nor Russia could realistically expect the same fortune for themselves. They were too big to rely on donations, and too heavily enmeshed in their state-socialist past to merit immediate attention of risk-averse investors. So, to a larger degree, they had been left to their own devices. The wait-and-see attitude of the West included political considerations that complicated economic reasoning: Ukrainian independence was treated as a precarious and fragile state of affairs, while the Russian drive at reintegration as compelling and potentially successful (W. Green Miller, personal interview, 25 October 1993). As one military analyst succinctly noted, "Western interests would after all have been better served by a Moscow-dominated Ukraine than by a nuclear Ukraine in confrontation with Moscow" (T. Taylor, 1994: 86). Such was a mainstream Western view on Russian -Ukrainian relations in the first years after the collapse of communism.

The vision of deep Russian-Ukrainian interdependence was well grounded in political-economic reality. Of all the former fifteen Union republics, it would be hard to find another pair with a similar degree of mutual economic interpenetration. For the overcentralized Soviet economy, Ukraine produced nearly 50 percent of iron ore, 41 percent of rolled steel, 31 percent of harvesters, 25 percent of computer and automation machinery, and 23 percent of coal (Diuk and Karatnycky, 1993: 98). Meanwhile, the Ukrainian share of the Soviet Union's population was less than 18 percent. Ukraine was a main breadbasket of the former superpower, and much of Ukrainian agricultural produce was consumed in the Russian Federation. Several important enterprises of the Soviet military-industrial complex

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[2]See more on the role Ukraine played in the collapse of the Soviet Union in Diuk and Karatnycky (1993); Kuzio and Wilson (1994); Motyl (1993) and Sakwa (1993).

were also located in Ukraine. They could not be easily replaced by ready-made Russian substitutes. The defense industry employed about 1.2 million of the Ukrainian labour force, or roughly 2.9 percent of the country's population (T. Taylor, 1994: 43). Millions of more conventional jobs were similarly dependent on the Russian market.

This level of economic interdependence was destined to shape all kinds of relationships between two countries for the years to come. As late as 1997, Russian-Ukrainian trade comprised up to 50 percent of import-export transactions between Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Nemtsov, 1997). It was not long before Russians became acutely aware of the strategic value of Ukraine as a supplier of manufactured and agricultural products, a partner in high-tech industries, a desired military ally and a supporting voice in international fora. Ukrainians, for their part, can fully appreciate the degree of the country's dependence on the Russian oil and gas, timber, paper and paper products, minerals and raw materials, electricity, automobiles and other machinery. Overall, more than 50 percent of Ukrainian imports and exports are normally generated in the Russian market (Kovalevs'ka, 1996). The issue of service parts produced on the "wrong" side of the border has been particularly painful for both parties.

Geopolitical implications of the economic predicament are many. Without Ukraine, Russia is weak, and Russians know that. As formulated by one traditionally schooled Russian diplomat, "We need Ukraine to negotiate with the West as equals" (Vassiliev, 1996). This perspective has been fully revealed in the Russian attempts to woo the Ukrainian political establishment before the Madrid 1997 NATO summit. The visions of a "strategic partnership" between two biggest of the Eastern Slavic countries are continuously propagated in Russian discourse on foreign policy. With Belarus serving as a tentative proof of feasibility of the reunification drive, Moscow becomes increasingly convinced that political and economic reintegration of the Russian Federation and Ukraine is "absolutely necessary and absolutely desirable" (Nemtsov, 1997).

Though more cautious in their visions of rapprochement, a significant number of the Ukrainian politicians, including many parliamentarians and several top aides to the president, are also willing to look into various models of a closer economic cooperation and trade union with Russia. Realistically speaking, the Ukrainian economy is doomed to be in dire straits for at least a couple of decades, if the trade turnover with Russia is not fully restored and even

advanced much farther than under the old regime. All of the traditionally strong sectors of the Ukrainian economy, as, for example, agriculture, machine building, shipbuilding and so on, are intensely dependent on Russian supplies. For the Ukrainian producers, loss of relatively cheap Russian imports means severe limitation of their own export capacities.

However, objectively existing economic interests can only prepare ground for a dialogue, not make it happen. Pure economic reasoning is not enough to raise Russian-Ukrainian relations to a new level of international solidarity and collaboration. The remaining obstacles have less to do with economics, and more with politics and culture.

Identity and culture in Russian-Ukrainian relations: a problem of interpretation

Moscow still sees Ukraine as "naturally belonging" to the original Russian universe. Ukraine, on the other hand, cannot help but keep a cautious distance from the former metropoly. Kiev wants to make sure that closer ties to Russia will not jeopardize the hardly won independence. Ukrainian politicians perceive Moscow's reintegrationist drive with a certain degree of suspicion, which is quite difficult for the Russians to either fully understand or even acknowledge.

Historically established stereotypes filter mutual perceptions. For Russians, Ukraine is not that different from Russia proper: a former hinterland that managed to break free. Consequently, Ukrainian "otherness" is perceived as something quite new and unexpected by not only Russian general public, but also politicians and intellectuals. Ukrainians parallel this historical blindness in their own obsession to prove Ukrainian distinctiveness even where it is hard to discern. For the Ukrainians, especially nationally conscious Ukrainians, differences between two countries are profound and numerous, and the more they get emphasized, the better for the Ukrainian cause.

The facts of history cannot definitively validate either position. However, in the realm of political culture perceptions and interpretations are at least as important as empirically established facts. Social meaning is constructed intersubjectively, so any change in configuration of social space affects what is perceived as truth at the moment. Because of that, studies in political culture can yield little more than a succession of interpretivist maps that allow the "reading" of some meanings people attach to their political behaviour. Whether we can always establish objective grounds beneath those meanings and rank their ideational

contents in order of proximity to the "truth," remains an open question that I would prefer to answer in the negative. Still, when a researcher is able to show the incomplete character of both (or several) contending "truths" and indicate the omissions made on each side, our knowledge of the studied process grows. The real-world actors may be pushed to a new level of self-awareness, too, which makes an interpretivist analysis pertinent for policy making and implementation.

When looking at Ukrainian-Russian relations from the vantage point of political culture theory, we can distinguish between three types of interrelated problems. First, political thinking and political behaviour of the parties are distinct, because they are informed by differences in political cultures of the two peoples. Quite often, these differences are ignored or inadequately reasoned out. Misunderstanding that follows could be avoided if more thought were given to the explicit comparison and reflection upon the nature of the observed variation.

Secondly, the national identities of the Ukrainians and Russians, despite close proximity of their languages, shared ancestry and intensely intertwined histories, are different. The difference was caused by diametrically opposed histories of political development. Ukrainians did not have their own state until recently, and the role of the state in the construction of a national idea is paramount. Political culture of a stateless nation left deep marks on the national identity of the people. The history of Russian political development was mostly free from this kind of problem. However, the Russian state has historically grown as a multinational continental empire. This fact contributed to the lack of clear ties between Russian nationality and the Russian statehood. Consequently, Russians still struggle to disentangle their national identity from its imperial connotations. In many ways, problems in the Ukrainian and the Russian nation building are flip sides of the same coin. Their national identities contain certain complexes that complement each other and certain less agreeable sides that are opposed to each other. The resulting ambivalence of mutual perception creates a stage where quick and easy resolution of a potential conflict should not be taken for granted. It might as well allow for the conflict's escalation, depending on current political influence of this or that system of meaning-structures and on the way politicians choose to use the available cultural resources.

The third group of problems pertaining to political-cultural aspects of Russian-

Ukrainian relations arises from the culture of a dialogue itself. A transnational dialogue is a very specific set of phenomena lying on the interface between politics and culture, domestic and international affairs. Political culture of transnational dialogue remains an understudied topic. Questions to be answered include the nature of the transnational dialogue, its "normal" structure and the rules of conduct, the measure of its dependence or independence on national idiosyncrasies of the participants and so on. Before continuing our assessment of contemporary developments in the Ukrainian-Russian relations, it seems logical to address some of these broader theoretical issues and to formulate more specific hypotheses regarding the political culture of international dialogue, as it exists in the relations between former Soviet republics.

Toward a theory of international dialogue

Touching upon the problems of intercultural understanding, Jürgen Habermas insists on the necessity to "capture the symmetry among the claims and perspectives of all participants in a dialogue," because "in a situation of profound disagreement, it is not only necessary for 'them' to try to understand things from 'our' perspective, 'we' have to try in the same manner to grasp things from 'their' perspective" (Habermas, 1992: 138). The point is methodologically useful for the discussion of the nature of international dialogue. By definition, a dialogue is a process of non-violent communication between two parties. The parties need not be equal in size or strength to qualify for a symmetrical relationship Habermas describes. Even "profound disagreement" cannot prevent any of them from being reasonably attentive to argumentation of the other. Situation of a dialogue demands, furthermore, that sides were able to communicate this attention and readiness to look into the substance of the argument. If the relationship between the parties is asymmetrical, or no mutual intention to narrow the gap between perspectives is conveyed, an interaction cannot be characterized as a dialogue[3].

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[3] Recently published works on international communication include Fred L. Casmir, ed., Ethics in Intercultural and International Communication (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997); I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen, eds., Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1997); P. Terrence Hopmann, The Negotiation Process and the Resolution of International Conflicts (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1996); Geoff Berridge, Talking to the Enemy: How States Without Diplomatic Relations Communicate (New York: St. Martin's, 1994).

International dialogue can be defined as a non-coercive, epistemologically symmetrical type of communicative relationship between the parties who may be considered as somehow representative of sovereign existence of the larger groups of people ("nations"), each having its own structure of political authority, unique territorial attachment, separate history and traditions of governance. The notion of "international dialogue," as many other concepts of social sciences, can be deceptive, since nations, of course, do not communicate directly. The real-world process of international communication involves designated individuals and groups who act in their symbolically representative capacity, using various communicative tools to reference a wider national community they represent. The basic model of international communication should always include two types of relationships: the immediately noticeable one, between negotiating parties, and the less obvious one, between national delegations and those who delegated them.

It is important to emphasize the identity-creating role of a representative party. No national identity can be described as "primordial." By the same token, no singular identity may cover all complexities of national behaviour. Identities are better understood as indices pointing out more or less important features in the life of a nation. "All self-awareness and all communication about the system within the system needs self-simplifying devices, i.e., identities. For the political system this function is fulfilled by the state" (Luhmann, 1990: 166). For international contacts, we might add, the same function of identity formulation and representation is executed by the groups of people speaking for the nations.

Who are these people? The most important group consists of politicians and statesmen, i.e. individuals in various positions of formal authority. Top politicians personally represent the nation in international public opinion and diplomatic negotiations. Secondly, we should consider political advisers, analysts and bureaucrats who are involved in policy formulation, but seldom speak for the government in international fora. The intellectual elite, leaders of national public opinion and other recognizable members of the national "writing class" form the third group of identity shapers. The "we-they" visions formulated by intelligentsia have a profound impact at the society at large, infiltrate policy making and implementation, and often structure conceptual horizons of negotiating parties.

An international dialogue has its own rules of conduct. They are not that different from the acknowledged norms of interpersonal communication. In addition to the above

mentioned requirements of a cognitive symmetry in bilateral perspectives and mutually conveyed willingness to communicate, they should include a sincere desire of both parties to direct their efforts toward reaching some imaginary point of agreement, where their currently held views on the problem may converge. The high culture of an international dialogue is demonstrated when both parties strive to learn from each other, even if newly acquired knowledge may cause certain displacements in the established belief structures:

> They would never seriously get a chance to learn from us if we did not have the chance to learn from them, and we only become aware of the limits of 'our' knowledge through the faltering of 'their' learning processes. The merging of interpretive horizons, which according to Gadamer is the goal of every process of reaching understanding, does not signify an assimilation to 'us'; rather, it must mean a convergence, steered through learning, of 'our' perspective and 'their' perspective – no matter whether 'they' or 'we' or both sides have to reformulate established practices of justification to a greater or lesser extent. For learning itself belongs neither to us nor to them; both sides are caught up in it in this same way. (Habermas, 1992: 138)

More specific features of international dialogue arise from its twofold structure and the complex social character of the participants. Two main subsystems that make up the structure of international dialogue revolve around the relations of international communication, on the one hand, and the domestically generated relations of representation, on the other hand. Because of the latter subsystem, an international dialogue may not be treated as a simple case of interpersonal communication, even if we look at a summit of two leaders. Both leaders would act in their symbolically representative capacity, which adds enormous social weight to their personalities and makes the exchange they have a matter of international concern.

National peculiarities of interacting parties enter the process of their communication through feedback mechanisms that connect the participants to domestic audiences and make these audiences virtually present at the table of negotiations. In addition, the actual participants to a dialogue had their personalities shaped by the respective socialization processes, national ideologies and political cultures. Any international exchange is, in this sense, culture-specific: it reflects idiosyncrasies of participating parties and their presently shared understanding of what constitutes an appropriate normative basis for negotiations.

If the political culture of a nation is a historically imprinted pattern of the nation's aggregate political behaviour, how are we to define the political culture of an international

dialogue? All dialogue situations are specific, and no pair of interacting countries can be identical to another pair, though basic structural similarities and certain common rules apply to every case. It seems natural to assume that the content, pace, and style of international communication depend on the input of negotiating parties. The political culture of international dialogue is a function of two parties' mutual stances, perceptions, domestic and international developments that are brought to bear upon the reciprocal images of each other and the respectively adopted strategies of negotiating behaviour. Since we agreed that acceptance of the dialogue roles brings about symmetrical mirroring and joint elaboration of the mutual claims and perspectives, we should define political culture of the international dialogue as a recurring, reciprocally established pattern of interaction between the involved nations that is immediately manifested and enacted by their symbolically entrusted representatives.

To be sure, the quality of an international dialogue more than on anything else depends on the epoch and its dominant ideology, revealed in a broader normative consensus underlying the international system's workings. Globally manifested "intersubjective systemic structures" (Wendt, 1994: 389) have an undeniable role in interstate relations. This, however, does not constitute the main focus of my concern here. Hegemonic views on the proper rules and the acceptable style of international exchange set the stage for most of the contemporary bilateral and multilateral negotiations. The study of these rules alone may not help much, if the task is to find what distinguishes one particular interactive process from a number of others that are also bound by the same hegemonic rules. In this latter case, what we need is a more scrupulous analysis of the culture that is created within the dialogue situation itself by the internal dynamics of reciprocal exchange of the specific national perspectives.

Archaic and non-systemic structures in the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue

When dealing with each other, the former Soviet republics attempt a dialogue where there was none or very little before. In the imperial Russian tradition, only Finland and Poland, among all the parts of the multiethnic Empire, were attributed a certain degree of legitimate "otherness," which was reflected in their official names of Grand Duchies. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union managed national republics in a way that was little

different from managing other territorial-administrative units or geographically concentrated industrial clusters. For all practical purposes, Kazakhs, Russians, or Georgians were really parts of the same politically defined nation. When each of these peoples obtained its "own" national state, the relations between them were launched into the realm of international politics almost overnight. The process of mutual adjustment to this new and largely unforeseen situation was bound to be fraught with difficulties.

The Russian-Ukrainian dialogue in particular is hard to treat as a regular case of international communication. For one thing, neither party sees it this way. Russians still try to approach Ukraine as a province in a jointly run state, while Ukrainians still see Russia as a main threat to their national independence. For another thing, the Russian-Ukrainian exchange has not yet approached the level of a full-fledged international dialogue, judging by a number of indicators that are open to external observation. The Ukrainian-Russian border is transparent, and its official delimitation and demarcation started, in earnest, by unilateral Ukrainian initiative, no earlier than 1997. Ukraine continues to participate in the Russia-led Commonwealth of Independent States, though in a limited capacity of an observer. Ukraine did not sign the 1992 Tashkent Treaty on Collective Security that effectively put joint military forces of the CIS under Russian control. At the same time, Ukrainians did not take any decisive action to withdraw from a joint air defense system with Russia. The trade between the two involves a substantial amount of direct and indirect Russian subsidies to Ukraine (see Åslund, 1995: 127, 139; Dawisha, 1996: 332); both sides still trade many goods on concessionist prices.

And yet, they objectively find themselves in the situation of an international dialogue, since these two states interact as equal sovereigns who see no higher authority above them and acknowledge no legal challenger to their domestically-advanced power claims. The Russian-Ukrainian dialogue is international in essence, but its meaning-structure is influenced by vestiges of other types of relationships. Those may be variously classified. Quite often, the Russian attitudes toward Ukraine are described as imperial or neoimperialist, and the position of Ukraine in the Russian sphere of influence as that of an actual or recently liberated colony (e.g., Diuk and Karatnycky, 1993; Motyl, 1993). The idea cannot but provoke more questions than it answers. Despite its metaphorical richness and tempting simplicity, the "colonial" thesis is flawed in the core. Though imperial heritage is indeed an important part

of today's Russia's life, I cannot agree with the claim of Ukraine's colonial "exploitation" by the Russians that stands in sharp contrast to the carefully tested statistical data (see Molchanov, 1994; Spechler, 1991). If Ukraine was a Russian colony, it was a colony that more than once exercised a culturally hegemonic role throughout the Empire and enjoyed what constituted a contemporary equivalent of the "most favored nation" status in dealing with the central Russian (and subsequently Soviet) authorities (Molchanov, 1996a; Ulianov, 1996). True, Ukraine was dominated politically. However, the imperial and Soviet structures of political domination usually included Ukrainians who occupied positions of senior authority throughout the empire. By all counts, Ukraine's colonial status with Russia cannot be taken for granted.

Another way to look at "non-systemic" relationships that seem to be present in the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue takes its cue from the centre-periphery model, with Moscow or St. Petersburg consistently playing the role of the centre. The period of Kievan Rus' may be invoked as a qualified exception to the rule. What currently goes under the name of the central Russian lands was clearly a periphery during the highlight of the Kievan Rus' empire. However, it would be extremely anachronistic to characterize political geography of the time in terms of the Ukrainian-Russian distinction. When that distinction became a reality, Ukraine was already positioned on the margins of the state formations established by the Russians, Poles, and Crimean Tatars. When Alexis Romanov, responding to the Ukrainian Cossacks' petition, extended Moscow's protectorate over the Eastern Ukraine ("Little Russia"), the Cossack state was unambiguously reduced to the status of an internal Russian periphery. Though the top Ukrainian elite would not yield to the most famous Russian families in either riches or influence at the court, it did not change Ukraine's peripheral status inside the Empire. The centre-periphery complex guided relations between Moscow and Kiev throughout the Soviet period as well. It undoubtedly marked mutual perceptions of the two countries in the first post-independence years.

It may be argued that a political culture of centre-periphery relations still hovers over Russian-Ukrainian negotiations. Russians cannot forget the prominent role they played in the Soviet Union, and miss the strong, Union-like state that could have revamped their feeling of being "the first among equals." Polls demonstrate that as many as three quarters of the Russian citizens remain convinced that the break-up of the Soviet Union has brought more

harm than good to their country (Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny, 1995: 72). Ukrainians, on the other hand, suffer from what nationally minded intellectuals call "a deep inferiority complex" (Lapychak, 1996: 7) toward the more powerful Russia and more "civilized" West. In the words of then-recently elected Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, Ukrainians "do not dream about the return of the Union even in the most terrible nightmares" (Nezavisimost', 25.11.1994: 1, 3). Of course, these are just prevalent opinions that may not represent all socially influential ideas circulating inside the society. There are dissenters on both Russian and Ukrainian sides. It is important to underscore, however, that these wildly different views are held by representatives of the respective national elites; by those people who speak for the nations and shape their identities.

The political culture of the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue is being formed in juxtaposition of three normative fields, or intersubjective meaning-structures of behaviour. The first is constituted by elements of the inherited Soviet culture. The centre-periphery stereotypes and the above mentioned inferiority complex, that I would argue is shared by both parties, belong here. The second and the third fields derive from the national political cultures, that is, those patterns of political behaviour that can be said to be more or less unique to the nation. Since nation-building processes are still going on all over the former Soviet space, these later elements are mobile and can be modified by deliberate efforts of "nationalizing" states (Brubaker, 1995). The Soviet legacy, on the contrary, is not open to change, since it may not be actually re-lived by contemporaries. Still, it may be variously interpreted, rearranged, and selectively activated by current players. As an important part of historical memory, Soviet inheritance is continuously addressed in contemporary political struggles.

The political culture of the Soviet period was ill suited for international dialogue. Soviet foreign policy had no place for nations per se, but only for the states and classes, or, more specifically, class "vanguards." Relationships between "sister republics" were treated as purely a domestic matter. The modes of administrative communication that were employed eschewed any possibility of a genuine dialogue. Soviet decentralization, more than in any other contemporary society, demanded new guarantees to the "existence of a capital, a center of usurpation and of substitution" (Derrida, 1976: 302). Administrative feedback could have been encouraged, but there was no intention nor objective ground to allow for anything like

reciprocity of the perspectives between the centre and the national peripheries. Instead, fervent policies of othering were commonly practiced.[4]

The Russian pressure and the Ukrainian response to it

This style of communication between the former Soviet republics, one of which has long been associated with the seat of power, could not disappear overnight. Throughout the first five post-independence years (1991-96), Ukrainians could not escape the feeling of "constant economic and political pressure that verges on ... blackmailing on the part of Russia" (Potekhin, 1995: 111). The signs of Russian haughtiness were numerous. First, the Russian Federation asserted itself as the only Soviet successor state that could bear full measure of responsibilities of its predecessor on international arena. In practical-political terms, it meant keeping the former Soviet seat at the UN Security Council, consolidating all ex-Soviet nuclear weapons on the Russian territory, refusing to share jointly accumulated hard currency, gold and diamond reserves with any other of the former republics, reclaiming all foreign assets of the fallen superpower for Russian possession. It also meant denying Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the rest of "sister republics" any say in these matters.

Secondly, Russia sought and received international recognition, if informal, of its self-proclaimed "peacekeeping" role throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union (Russell, 1995: 55). The CIS peacekeeping operations have helped to re-establish Russian presence in the Caucasus (South Ossetia, Abkhazia) and Central Asia (Tajikistan). The North Caucasian theatre prompted collaboration of Abkhazians and Georgians alike. Peacekeeping in Tajikistan allowed supplementing the core Russian contingent with a certain number of Kazakh, Uzbek, and Kyrgyz troops. Their presence buttressed the claim of multinational character of the force and moved the Central Asian states back into the orbit of Russian military influence. In South Caucasus, neither Armenian nor Azeri sides to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict could afford to ignore the Russian presence in the area. Both had to conclude separate bilateral treaties on military assistance and consultations with Russians. Finally, several retired and semi-retired Russian officers chose to serve in the armed forces of separatist Trans-Dniester and Nagorno-Karabakh "republics" (east Moldova and south-

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[4] Indefatigable struggle of the Soviet communist authorities against the "relics of bourgeois nationalism" in the republics may serve a good illustration. Cf. Neumann, 1996: 159.

west Azerbaijan, respectively). Though officially beyond Moscow's control, many of these field commanders nevertheless kept allegiance to the flag, as seen, for example, in wide use of former Soviet symbols by the Transdniestrian separatists.

With Russia flexing muscles in close proximity to Ukraine, Kiev went on to diversify its military contacts and cooperation with other countries. Ukraine was the first of the CIS states to apply for membership in the NATO's Partnership for Peace program that was launched in January 1994. It has also joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the Council of Europe. The latter organization extended an invitation to Ukraine before the similar offer was made to Russia, thus showing its appraisal of the country's internal stability and democratic development. Finally, Ukraine not only managed to sign its own Charter on "special partnership" with NATO (9 July 1997), but achieved this only weeks after inauguration of the respective Russia-NATO Founding Act (27 May 1997). While the Russia-NATO agreement tasted sour to many Russian politicians, analysts unambiguously regarded preparation of the Ukrainian-NATO Charter as a sound victory of Ukrainian diplomacy (Goble, 1997; cf. Portnikov, 1997).

Ukrainian troops regularly participate in joint military exercises with NATO countries. According to the Ukrainian diplomats, these drills are welcome by Kiev, since they "make the Ukrainian army prepared for field interaction with the Western armies and demonstrate this readiness to Russia" (Gorin, 1996). So plainly stated a rationale is no secret to the Russians. Their feelings about Ukraine seeking the Western protection against the (mis)perceived Russian threat were expressed during the Sea Breeze '97 maneuvers that involved the U.S. Marines' participation in pacifying of a mythical ethnic revolt on the Ukrainian territory. Though the script had been belatedly changed to introduce a relief operation after an "earthquake," Russian anger could not be as easily dissipated. "Military exercises are a matter of the internal affairs of any country, but we perfectly well understand what was meant by the 'orange country' and the 'mass unrest' that needed to be quelled," said the spokesman for the Russian Black Sea Fleet. "We have to ask ourselves in whose interest it is to cause an 'earthquake'" (cit. in Williams, 1997). Understandably, the Russians refused to take part in the maneuvers that were presumably devised to further collaboration among the Black Sea littoral states.

Why did Ukrainians not choose to build their national security with Russia and not

against it? First, fear to pave the way to the eventual Russian domination prevented Ukraine from signing the CIS Statute – meaning that Ukraine has never become a full-fledged CIS member. The 1992 Tashkent Treaty on Collective Security could not have been signed either, since it would have meant denouncing part of Ukraine's sovereignty in a most sensitive area of defense planning and military-political decision making. Later on, Ukraine firmly declined the Russian idea of "strategic partnership" that, if realized as seen from Moscow, would bring notable limitations to the Ukrainian non-aligned status.

A few examples of moderately successful Ukrainian-Russian military collaboration in the post-Soviet space include their joint air defense system, the 1993 peacekeeping mission in Western Georgia that drew the naval forces of then undivided Black Sea fleet (Pikayev, 1996: 58), and the "Breeze '94" naval exercises in the Black Sea with the U.S. and four other countries, Russia among them. Subsequent dispute on the matters pertaining to the division of the BSF ships and infrastructure poisoned a precarious relationship until the conclusion of the Russian-Ukrainian agreement on the Black Sea Fleet on 28 May 1997 and the comprehensive Treaty on friendship and cooperation on 31 May 1997. Even then, Russian efforts to draw Ukraine into much closer military collaboration than Ukrainians deem necessary did not recede. The prize is too high to be abandoned easily: according to some estimates, up to two thirds of the Soviet Ukraine's industrial base was used for military-related purposes (Potekhin, 1995: 85). Consequently, Ukraine's coming aboard could immensely boost the Russia-led transformation of the CIS into a regular military alliance. Ukraine, however, is a non-aligned, neutral power. It does not strive to become a member of any military bloc at the moment. While the Ukrainian leaders have more than once mentioned that the current non-aligned status of Ukraine should not be regarded as its eternal destiny, they did not intend to probe the ground for more intensive military collaboration with Russia. On the contrary: the remarks seemed to indicate Ukraine's readiness to move closer to the West if relations with Russia took a turn for the worse.

Thus, the military policies of the two biggest Slavic countries are divergent. Particularly on the issue of military collaboration, Ukraine prefers to talk to Russia via NATO and the USA. Methods of indirect communication are used by Russia as well: the CIS peacekeeping missions give but one example. The Russian mediation of Transdniestrian conflict offers another, since Ukraine has also been invited to mediate the dispute that in

many ways is reminiscent of the Ukraine's own problems with Transcarpathia and Crimea. The Russian "appellation" of Ukraine via the third party was exemplified by the Trilateral Agreement between Russia, the USA, and Ukraine (14 January 1994) that satisfied both Russian and American nuclear non-proliferation goals. The Ukrainian way to send Russia a message triumphed with recognition of the Ukrainian security concerns in the Ukraine-NATO Charter.

To the Russian peacekeeping activities in the CIS, Ukraine has counterposed its own participation in the UN peacekeeping operations around the globe. With this move, Ukraine became the second, after Russia, and the only other post-Soviet state to participate in the UN peacekeeping missions on a permanent basis. Ukrainian troops joined seven of the UN peacekeeping missions and served as a part of the IFOR under the NATO sponsorship in Bosnia. Their important role in peacekeeping operations was praised by both local powers and the United Nations. During the 49th session of the UN General Assembly (September 1994), Ukrainian representatives announced the republic's readiness to launch peacekeeping missions throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union, specifically in Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh, pending the approval of such a mission by either the UN or the CSCE. Ukrainians have also worked with the UN observers' team in Tajikistan. In 1996, a Ukrainian diplomat became a deputy chairperson for the 52nd session of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

All these activities are obviously aimed at boosting the international prestige of the country. Another, less explicit target of Ukrainian multilateral diplomacy is Russia. By offering its support to countries until recently tied to Moscow's help, Ukraine establishes itself as a reliable international actor in its own right, as a force that should be dealt with directly. Being itself a newly independent state, Ukraine helps other countries to break their former dependencies, too. The Ukrainian assistance is based on the premise that the assisted states may not be able to afford the decisive departure themselves and have to rely on some friendly powers to diversify their international connections.

Ukraine's international activities appear as an important factor preventing re-creation of the Russian hegemony in the region. From the perspective of the Ukrainian-Russian negotiations, diplomatic efforts of this kind represent Ukraine's attempt to level the ground for a dialogue, though they cannot be considered a part of the dialogue itself. Ukraine strives

to counter Russia's pretensions at a unique role in the post-Soviet space with a number of initiatives that vividly demonstrate that this pretension is somewhat overstated. In the meantime, posthegemonic Russia has to negotiate a difficult path between the Scylla of its Soviet past and the Charybdis of imperial memories.

Wrong starts: From the centre-periphery to the imperial model of communication

It may be argued that nothing else but the inherited culture of the command-administrative system gave Russian-Ukrainian relations after communism a wrong start. Where direct negotiations took place, they were often distinguished by domineering on the Russian side. Where Moscow could not secure a dominant position for itself, it tried to avoid contact altogether. No less than six cancellations of the planned official visit of the Russian President to Ukraine illustrate the tactics.

If remnants of the Soviet administrative culture[5] are held responsible for lapses into the centre-periphery style of relationships, several other meaning-complexes influence the political culture of the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue as well. On the other hand, the centre-periphery modelling of Moscow's relations to the "near abroad" has not focused solely on Ukraine. Basically the same attitude characterized Russia's view of the Baltic countries until recently (Hallik, 1996) and still dominates Moscow's way of doing business with the Caucasian and Central Asian states.

As Russia moves further away from its Soviet past, long-standing features of the traditional political culture reappear in new institutional settings. Desperate attempts to resurrect the bygone imperial glory are visible in numerous monuments mushrooming in Moscow's squares. Huge amounts of money are poured into renovation and resuscitation of churches and cathedrals, as, for example, in the famous case of Christ the Saviour cathedral in the centre of Moscow. Special rights of the Cossack "estate" are once again acknowledged and confirmed by the government. The Russian Orthodox Church is being continuously consulted on the matters of the state importance, and the new Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations, that discriminates against "non-traditional" denominations, was

[5]The corporatist-participatory style of the Soviet political culture betrays the fact that its true nature was administrative, not political in a regular sense of the word. Brezhnev's period in particular conflated domestic politics with administration.

adopted, on the Church's insistence, on 25 September 1997 (see Uzzell, 1997). All those and many more examples witness to the sustained effort to solve the identity crisis by pushing the country "back to the roots." The initial period of ruthless money grabbing ("primitive accumulation of capital") obviously nears its end, and the conservative side in the political culture of the Russian elite comes to the forefront, shadowing previously dominant behavioural patterns of "revolutionist" acquisition.

This switch of priorities has direct bearing on the Russian view of Ukraine. The idea of cultural and political unity between Russians and Ukrainians serves as one of the linchpins in the Russian conservative system of values. Ukraine plays a special role for both traditional and contemporary Russian ethnonational identity. If we equate Kievan Rus' with Ukraine, as some historians attempted to do (see Hrushevsky, 1965), it is really hard, if at all possible, to distinguish any non-Ukrainian foundations of the Russian national identity. Ukraine becomes a mirror where Russia seeks to find her own image from the most distant times up to the present. The core of the Russian national identity reveals itself as essentially Ukrainian.[6]

If so or not, the "loss" of Ukraine by Russia invokes feelings of existential anguish that are shared by the elite and common folk alike. Political repercussions of this predicament can be seen in the attempts to structure the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue along the lines of the revamped imperial discourse. The imperial model provides a much needed mode of communication and a common cultural and political field, where both Russians and Ukrainians can be imagined in their "proper" roles and allegedly non-problematic, harmonious relations.

Leading Russian intellectuals do not spare their efforts to rehabilitate the legacy of the empire. It has been asserted, for example, that "Russia is an imperial hypostasis of the Western universe," "a corporate society of an imperial type," "a unique project" of the empire bound by a "powerful unifying idea," and so on (Kurginian, 1995: 450, 452, 457). Sympathies to the "imperial project" are manifested on the right and the left sides of the political spectrum. Both agree that Russian statehood is inseparable from its traditional, imperial form of development. The so-called statists take pride in this legacy, which they

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[6] See more on that in Mikhail A. Molchanov, 1996a.

often see in a theological, almost providentialist manner:

> A historical movement from Rome through Byzantium to Moscow signified incremental evolution of the three main sources of imperial statehood: the power- based Roman legal unity was enriched by the Byzantine spiritual and ethical Christian unity and finally completed in the popular unity of the Moscow Rus'- Russia. (Zyuganov, 1994: 15).

Being thusly transformed by the power of quasi-Hegelian dialectics, Russia finds itself, if not at the pinnacle of world civilization, then, at a minimum, in a position of the legitimate wielder of immense cultural and historical heritage, most of which should be embraced fully and unreservedly.

If an empire, or "neo-empire" (Kurginian, 1995) is good, the current state of affairs in the post-Soviet political space has to be regarded with a mix of sadness and indignation, and the events that led to it with deep criticism and suspicion. Quite logically, the leader of the Russian communists sees abolition of the Belovezhe agreements that precipitated the end of the Soviet Union as his party's "historical task, an inevitable process that will sooner or later bring its fruit" (cit. in Vysokyi Zamok 176 (26.12.1995): 1). The speaker of the Russian Duma (1993-95) Ivan Rybkin[7] explicitly invokes the idea of "gathering of lands," viewing demarcation of the "internal" borders between the post-Soviet states as "unnatural" (Nezavisimaia gazeta 129 (28.11.1995): 1).

Elites, masses, and possibility of a "hot" conflict

Ukrainians cannot but feel alarmed by these and related pronouncements. Even those public figures that are often accused of being excessively "pro-Russian" by their political opponents, now and then criticise Russian politicians for having an "imperial attitude toward Ukraine," or failing to treat her "as a sovereign state" (RFE/RL online, 20 February 1997). When broader foreign policies of the two are compared, Ukrainian diplomats not infrequently counterpose what they believe are legitimate, "purely national" goals of their country to the alleged "geopolitical" ambitions of the Russian Federation (Zlenko, 1996a). Nationalist intellectuals interpret resurrection of the Russian imperial discourse as a sign of imminent and mortal threat to Ukrainian independence and (in extreme) even physical existence of the Ukrainian nation (e.g., Sentchylo, 1995).

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[7] Appointed Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation on 19 October 1996.

However, the Ukrainian people at large remain mostly indifferent to the alarmist outcry of some representatives of the "writing class." If "Greater Ukraine" has to be built, in a local poet's words, out of combination of Little Russia and Little Poland (cit. in The Economist, 17 February 1996: 48), no national identity that could help to bridge these two parts has been furnished yet. In the former Soviet Union, a Russified East and a Polonized West were held together by sheer force of the state. It seems that now they are still together due to the force of inertia and certain hardly reversible changes in international legal system: the times when more powerful neighbour states could simply divide a weakling among themselves are probably gone for good. This makes Russian "imperialism" very much a paper product for domestic consumption, and the chance of a large-scale military conflict between Ukraine and Russia unquestionably minimal in the eyes of a greater part of the Ukrainian populace.

At present, the Ukrainian army cannot be anything else but heavily Russian in its ethnic composition and Russophone in the inherited mode of communication. Most of its officers detest even thinking about the possibility of the Ukrainian-Russian warfare. When the former chief of the "psychological Directorate" Gen. V. Muliava tried to "re-educate" psychologically "unprepared" officers according to his own visions of the most probable enemy (Russia), an almost unanimous reaction of the Ukrainian brass forced him into the early retirement. A militant anti-Russian position of the former Minister of Defence Gen. K. Morozov resulted in a similar outcome.[8] No wonder: not only is Russian the second dominant language, and the Russians the largest national minority in Ukraine, but almost half of the Ukrainian oblasti have populations that are at least 20 percent Russian (Resler, 1997: 100). Pro-Russian sentiments run deep in the Ukrainian society and the Ukrainian army.

By the same token, anti-Ukrainian feelings have little chance to develop inside the Russian army. Thousands of Russian officers and privates are ethnic Ukrainians. Thousands more have relatives in Ukraine. The oft-cited blurred national identity of the Russians may help to contain a developing conflict within more or less reasonable limits, as fighting the people so closely related by blood, language, and culture as Ukrainians is not an easy task even for an obedient professional, to say nothing about eighteen-to-twenty-years-old

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[8] See more on military-political developments in Ukraine in John S. Jaworsky, 1995.

conscripts. Besides, Russia is still recovering from the massive losses of the Chechen war. The moral trauma caused by the "domestic" warfare overshadowed even the unforgettable Afghan experience. If coming to war with the Chechens, who are ethnically, religiously, and culturally distant from the Russians, could provoke unprecedented anti-governmental outrage throughout Russia, then what should be an expected reaction to a military conflict with one's own ethnic kin (as Ukrainians are commonly perceived by Russians)?

Both Russian imperialism and Ukrainian nationalism are ideologies of the elite. Neither may be considered as forming a part of the established political culture of the masses. What we can see here is a profound split between elite and mass political cultures; between officially propagated or officially tolerated ideological discourses, on the one hand, and non-ideological modes of mass behaviour, on the other hand. The situation can be described, in Althusserian jargon, as attempts at ideological "interpellation" falling on the deaf ears of "interpellated subjects" who, therefore, fail to recognize any single Subject (value system) as a superior authority over their thoughts and social interactions (Althusser, 1971; see also Therborn, 1980). A more conventional way to say the same thing is to note the "political passivity" and indifference of the people, which is a topic familiar from the postcommunist debates and newly popular with Western "transitologists and consolidologists" (Schmitter with Karl, 1994). The Althusserian language allows us a more incisive look at the problem, though, since mass refusal to be "interpellated" is not a sign of political "indifference" and passive obedience. Conscious and unwaveringly upheld bottom-up deideologization of a society carries a promise of its future pluralization and indicates people's desire not to be brainwashed again. Mass disengagement from ethnopolitical games played by elites on both sides can be seen as a necessary precondition for the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue to take root and develop.

If the Russian-Ukrainian relations nevertheless deteriorate, one may be prompted to ask what factors will determine the potential outcome of a conflict? What value systems may be invoked by conflicting parties to help them "choose between alternatives, resolve conflicts, and make decisions" (Rokeach, 1973: 14)? On the Russian side, the residual imperialism of the elite will be curbed by the traditional conservatism of the masses. The external conflict will be immediately internalized, with the majority of the people arguing for peaceful resolution of the problem and threatening civil disobedience in case the "party of

war" keeps pushing things forward to an open military confrontation. A protracted political crisis at home would follow, shaking both the state and the society. On the Ukrainian side, actions of the government would be filtered through a mixture of survivalist complexes, old and new structures of dependency, and well-ingrained habits of accommodation. Ukrainian public would remain divided on the issue, with a small militant minority advocating the use of force and a much greater number seeking to stop the escalation by all means necessary. Eventually, some strategy of accommodation would prevail, with international arbiters conceivably involved in the dispute on either both parties' request or an appeal of the Ukrainian side.

An armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine seems unlikely to develop at the moment. The reasons are many: they are certainly not limited to political-cultural causes. Existing international regimes do not support military solutions to interstate problems. The false starts of economic restructuring in both Russia and Ukraine left underfunded and undermanned armies hardly prepared for the combat. The political regimes are unstable, which makes them wary of any large-scale conflict involving military forces. Loyalty and manageability of the army cannot be assured. Additionally, both countries are subject to demographic shifts that change the size of an average family, reduce the expected number of children per family and thus affect the society's ability and willingness to endure more than minimal casualties from war-related causes.[9]

And yet, political culture has to be found among other independent variables affecting international relations in the region. This hypothesis follows an established tradition of tracing causal links from individual countries' political regimes to their mutual perceptions, foreign policies and ways of dealing with each other. The well-known postulate of "democratic peace" (see discussion in Ray, 1995) also operates in essentially political-cultural categories, asserting that democratic countries never wage wars among themselves. Though neither Russia nor Ukraine can be considered fully democratized societies, they will hardly go to war with each other for reasons that have more to do with their intermeshed identities. Existing political-cultural differences between Ukrainians and Russians are complementary, rather than contradictory and mutually exclusive. This means that differences

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[9] On the relationship between low birth rates and a country's willingness to go to war see several articles by Edward Luttwak, e.g.: "Where are the great powers?" Foreign Affairs 73.4 (July/August 1994): 23-28.

are used as a tool of communication, not barrier to it. They enrich ethnocultural interaction and create a common cultural universe that extends beyond the nation-state borders. In T. H. Eriksen's words (1993: 27-28),

> Such an acknowledgement of differences can be labelled `complementarisation'. Here, the cultural differences communicated through ethnicity are considered a fact and frequently an asset. Whereas dichotomisation essentially expresses an Us-Them kind of relationship, complementarisation can be described as a We-You kind of process. <...> [E]thnicity entails the establishment of both Us-Them contrasts (dichotomisation) and a shared field for interethnic discourse and interaction (complementarisation).

Of course, there may be fringe groups on both sides that would advocate applying a radicalized form of the Us-Them approach to the opponent.[10] This may entail accepting a more militant posture in the time of a conflict. Some episodes of the recent Crimean dispute actually demonstrate this tendency.[11] However, the primary tone of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian dialogue is determined by a more or less sincere desire to find a mutually acceptable way to solve the existing problems. The conclusion of the Treaty on friendship between two states ended the initial period of their postcommunist coexistence and marked a decisive shift to the We-You attitude that benefited both sides.

Political culture changes and new prospects for the Ukrainian-Russian dialogue

The six years that passed before the Treaty was concluded had been a period of intense search for new meaning structures in both ethnopolitical and political-cultural fields of interaction of the two nations. In the field of ethnopolitics, Russia had to accommodate newly found Ukrainian "otherness" and replace the inherited command and control mechanisms that were traditionally used to deal with Ukraine by previously unthought-of mechanisms of international communication. Ukraine, for her own part, had to go through the cycle of ethnopolitical rejection – counterposition – complementarization: from seeing Russia as the main threat to national independence to finding a more receptive and less

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[10] Cf. the statement by the Ukrainian Republican Party on its "categorical opposition" to the signing of the Treaty on friendship and cooperation with Russia (Za vil'nu Ukrajinu 13.01.1996: 1), or the Russian Duma's deputy speaker S. Baburin's declaration on "anti-Russianness" of the Ukrainian Constitution (Nezavisimost' 90 (12.07.1996): 3).

[11] For example, an episode when the Western Ukrainian youth were recruited by a nationalist politician to fight the Russian separatists in the area (Pikhovshek, 1995: 54).

alienated position on terms that did not compromise national sovereignty. Russian political culture has been divested of many remnants of its Soviet past. It has grown less revolutionary and more conservative, as the latest capitalist revolution succeeded in changing the social structure and economic system of the country. Developmental-authoritarian complexes were less expressed throughout the nineties. However strange it may sound, development is low on the list of priorities of current Russian elite, while authoritarianism is simply not an option in the state that can barely control the situation of "modern feudalism" it has itself created. Nationalist mobilization has been attempted to compensate for the state incapacity.

In Ukraine, a similarly toothless "authoritarianism" has been largely modelled after the Russian prototype. Certain restrictions on the freedom of media were implemented (The Economist, 15-21 March 1997: 59), and unions have been predominantly kept under state control (Kubicek, 1996). Ukrainian political culture is still fragmented in several mediums, of which the eastern-western divide is the most important. Though familiar structures of dependency persisted, the Ukrainian elite managed to diversify them by seeking and finding new sponsors in previously disinterested Western countries. Traditional Ukrainian survivalism is now manifested through personal networks and informal self-help associations much more than through clientelist modes of behaviour that went practically unchallenged before. Overall, the political culture of the newly independent state is becoming less parochial, as Ukraine is now wide open to both global and regional influences that affect all sides of people's lives: from education to labour mentality to political participation to consumer preferences. After six years of independence, Ukraine exhibits a number of features of an open, pluralistic society, though the state-corporatist framework is still there, continuing to inhibit perspectives for further development.

If the rules of conduct in international dialogue and the nature of a dialogue itself are derivative from what conferring parties bring into it, we should conclude that current prospects for Ukrainian-Russian relations must be read optimistically. For the first time in both peoples' history, they are now well positioned to finally abandon previously-employed models of unequal, distorted and mutually distorting communication: those of the centre-periphery and the empire-province relations. Making use of Habermasian postulates, one might say that "the symmetry among the claims and perspectives" of the actors (Habermas, 1992: 138) is now coming into being, thus enabling the parties to see the Self in the Other

and the Other in the Self.

It does not mean that the dialogue should always be amicable; it only indicates the fact that it is going on. The achieved symmetry of the perspectives reflects a relative equalization of international positions of the parties. Of course, Russia is almost three times bigger in terms of population and possesses a much larger territory, but these are not the most important factors to consider in contemporary international politics. In terms of economy, Ukraine is not that far behind (see Åslund, 1995). Ukrainian army is the second biggest of all the post-Soviet and other Eastern European states. Ukrainian high-tech and military industries are roughly comparable to their Russian counterparts. Finally, Ukraine was able to establish an international identity separate from Russia and use it as a strategic resource in its own right. Whether a "barrier" or a "bridge," Ukraine is now universally regarded as "Europe's linchpin" (Mroz and Pavliuk, 1996), the state that holds the key to stability in the European region as a whole.[12]

International dialogue, by definition, is an exchange between equals. Understandably, equality in this context has to be taken only in a sense of equal legitimacy of the opposed claims of the parties, that is, in its rather abstract epistemological, legal and moral connotations. It does not connote equal power capabilities, resources, roles or positions in the international system or various international regimes comprising it. However, it does refer to more or less equal preparedness of the parties to acknowledge negotiating rights and abilities of the other as structurally, genetically and ontologically similar to one's own rights and abilities. In other words, the sense of equality extends to cover validity claims of the opponents, their interpretive horizons and meaning structures employed in the dialogue. It may not extend to cover those meaning-structures that are irrelevant to the dialogue, or other potentially incongruent aspects of the two nations' lifeworlds. This sense of equality is often promoted through mediation of the third party or in the situation of multilateral exchange

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[12] Of course, the Ukrainian political elite were among the first to advocate this view of the country's strategic importance. The theme was recurrent in my interviews with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the UN, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine A. Zlenko (Edmonton, 31 May 1996, and New York, 16 September 1996), the Ukrainian Ambassador to Canada V. Furkalo (Edmonton, 10 June 1996); in several talks with the top presidential adviser in Kravchuk's administration M. Mykhalchenko et al. The fact that the Ukrainians, though not without help of their sympathizers in the West, were able to "sell" this idea so successfully as to establish very special relations with the USA, NATO, and Russia alike says much about potency of imagery in today's geopolitical thinking and international relations.

where both interlocutors occupy structurally homological ("symmetrical") positions. Equal treatment by other international actors, especially those able to exercise direct and indirect influence on both interlocutors and international community at large, levels off disparities in relative standing of the conferring parties, thus making negotiators equal in the phenomenological reality of a dialogue.

In Ukrainian-Russian relations, the advances of both parties toward this understanding of equality are obvious. The notion of "strategic partnership," first used by the Russians to promote a slightly disguised concept of hegemonic leadership vis-à-vis Ukraine, has recently acquired a more direct and unambiguous meaning. When the Ukrainian President says that "Russia has been, still is and will remain our principal strategic partner" (Trud 24.03.1995: 1), it is not a declaration of a patron-client relationship, but the acknowledgement of the fact that partners are many, and some of them should be given priority, according to Ukraine's own strategic national interests. Thus taken, the notion of "strategic partnership" is not tied to Russia only. Strategically speaking, the USA, Canada, or the European Union are no less important, and Ukrainian political leaders do not hesitate to emphasize the point in their communication with Russia.[13] In the Ukrainian President's words, "We do not face a choice – East or West. We are ready for a dialogue with all the sides. Ready to go a first step forward. But we also expect some reciprocal movement..." (Zerkalo nedeli 9 (02-06.03.1996): 1, 4).

Is Russia ready to reciprocate? Several analysts insisted it was not, even on the eve of Yeltsin's visit to Kiev to sign the Treaty on friendship and cooperation between two countries (see Kuzio, 1997). Nevertheless, as subsequent events have shown, the oft-cited Russian "imperialism" appeared tempered enough to accommodate the Ukrainian concerns. The Treaty was signed, the status of Sevastopol confirmed, the final decision on the Black Sea fleet achieved. Immediately thereafter, the signing of the Ukrainian-NATO Charter caused no objections on the Russian part. Have these developments been totally unexpected?

Not for a political culture analyst. Though I still believe that the juxtaposition of radicalism and authoritarianism in the Russian elite political culture can produce a quite dangerous hybrid in, for example, attempts to pacify an ethnic conflict in the Caucasus

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[13] See L. Kuchma's interview in Izvestia 13.07.1994: 1-2.

(Molchanov, 1996b), this scheme's application to the Russian-Ukrainian relations is limited by considerations of ethnic kinship, cultural complementarity and equal legitimacy of competing claims of the sides. It is not accidental that the majority of the Ukrainian officers admitted they would not fight the Russians in case of a military conflict (Region 1 (10-16.01.1996): 7). Similar feelings are widespread in the Russian army.

The sense of equality and complementarity, deeply rooted in mutually intertwined history and culture, is manifested in a number of ways that go beyond the immediate reality of inter-state negotiations. One may think of mutual borrowings from the arsenal of seemingly successful schemes of political action, pioneered by the other side. Thus, the Ukrainian executive has been largely modelled after the Russian prototype. In granting the president an impressive array of functions and privileges, the Ukrainian Constitution (1996) copies many of the respective provisions of the earlier adopted (1993) Constitution of the Russian Federation. The use of referenda as means to overcome the executive-legislative gridlock was first mastered by Yeltsin; subsequently, Leonid Kuchma threatened to call a referendum if the constitutional crisis in Ukraine could not be resolved otherwise. The Russian elite, on their own part, learn typically Ukrainian methods of "soft" marginalization of opposition and, prompted by the Ukrainian example, has started paying more attention to media control by the government. Russia's recent relative economic closure and introduction of certain protectionist measures in trade and industrial policies may have also resulted from studying the Ukrainian example, as well as from other, more direct political-economic causes. Ukraine's steadfast position on the necessity of peaceful resolution of the Chechen crisis and demonstration of a civilized approach to the problem of its own local (Crimean) separatism has certainly influenced public opinion in Russia, contributing to the atmosphere that made the Russian-Chechen negotiations possible.

If the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue is finally on the right track and going, what are the prospects for its subsequent development? The previous analysis seemed to corroborate the conclusion that, despite a number of the existing problems, we should exclude the possibility of a sudden dramatic deterioration in inter-state relations between the two countries. However interesting the topic might be for security analysts (e.g., Blair, 1995: 81-82 *n.16*), an armed conflict will probably not happen in this part of the globe in foreseeable future. On the other extreme, voluntary reintegration of Ukraine and Russia in a single, even if confederated state,

may not materialize either, since the Ukrainian elite are not exactly happy with the prospect. Ukrainians detest what L. Kuchma called an "arrogant mood that is now and then revealed in a way Russian politicians treat their neighbours" (Kievskie Novosti 1 (Jan. 1996): 4-5). If an economic union, a kind of the East European Common Market (see Blanchard et al., 1993), or a free trade agreement among the leading post-Soviet states are certainly desirable and may promote national interests of all the involved parties, political reunification, as undivided love, belongs to the realm of fantasy of certain top politicians in Moscow. Whether or not the project may be successful with Belarus, remains to be seen, as "even brotherhood with Minsk appears dubious" (Dubnov, 1997: 13). No other obvious aspirants to join the renewed Union have emerged at the moment.

Conclusion

The Russian-Ukrainian dialogue is as ambivalent as juxtaposition of two intrinsically ambivalent political cultures and intermeshed national identities could only make it. On the other hand, Russia and Ukraine are "strategic partners" and have to be genuinely concerned about each other's prosperity and overall well being. More than 50 percent of the Ukrainian export-import transactions are generated on the Russian market (Robitnycha gazeta Ukrajiny 32 (29.02.1996): 1). The degree of Russian (rarely acknowledged) dependence on Ukrainian economic health is also considerable (Nemtsov, 1997). Despite all odds, Russia keeps propping up the Ukrainian postcommunist economy to the tune of estimated total of $ 12.6 billion in implicit energy subsidies alone (Krasnov and Brada, 1997: 837). One year after Ukraine broke off, Russia kept financing up to 22 percent of the Ukrainian GDP with subsidized credits (Åslund, 1995: 127). Though now this figure is substantially lower, as late as 1995 the financial support of the Ukrainian economy by two of the former sister republics - Russia and Turkmenistan - outweighed the financial contribution of the IMF and the World Bank combined (calculated from Åslund, 1995: 139). Considering this statistic, one may be forced to agree with Hannes Adomeit's view on current Ukraine's predicament: "If the country were to fall apart, or fall into Russia's lap, it would be not because of destabilization attempts from the outside but because of Kiev's inability to make the best of its independence" (Adomeit, 1995: 61).

On the other hand, whether said in open or tacitly assumed, the Ukrainian political

establishment sticks to the belief that the main potential threat to the country's independence is represented by re-emerging Russian hegemony in the area. The Trilateral Agreement with Russia and the USA (January 1994), the Russian-Ukrainian Treaty on friendship and cooperation (May 1997) and especially the Ukraine-NATO Charter (July 1997) were all signed in a hope to create a firm legal framework for the uneasy relationship and to provide for international arbitration of a dispute that may emerge between the two post-Soviet states. We cannot say that the Ukrainian fears are completely unwarranted, though they may be somewhat exaggerated. Various statements denigrating political independence of Ukraine and challenging its territorial integrity were advanced by several important Russian politicians: from Baburin, Luzhkov and Lebed to Zatulin, Zyuganov and Zhirinovsky. Many on this list are erstwhile presidential contenders or can run for the presidency in the near future.

It is true that merger is a simplest way to overcome dependency. Other things being equal, the solution works as nicely for international politics as it does for corporate relations. However, "other things" in international relations of today make this approach too costly to implement and too dangerous to play with. The Iraqi example hardly calls for repetition. Russia may be dependent on Ukraine in a number of ways, but it has to deploy other strategies to better serve its national interests.

International dialogue is a preferred strategy for mutually beneficial cooperation. Any dialogue builds upon the fact that parties recognize each other as fundamentally equal in at least one significant respect. In international dialogue, substantial equality of the parties is based upon reciprocal recognition of a partner as a sovereign nation-state or its symbolically authorized representative. The act of recognition has its formal (diplomatic) component, but extends beyond it, to include, importantly, a number of less rigidly codified means of attitudinal, communicative and behavioral expression. The political culture of international dialogue is nothing else but an aggregate manifestation of the latter.

Traditionally, the Russian political elité and its Soviet successors failed to treat Ukrainians as equals. Until recently, the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue was haunted with reminiscences of that attitude. Remnants of the centre-periphery relations kept afloat elements of snobbish mentality on the Russian side and fed into the Ukrainian culture of political dependency and parochialism. Times have changed, though, and it is now in Russia's best interests to address the Ukrainians with all the respect due to a foreign partner. As a Russian

analyst has put it,

> A new atmosphere is needed in the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue for restoring the balance in the real way – the understanding by Moscow of the evident fact that Ukraine has its aims, past and future. Provided such understanding is reached, Ukraine should realize that Russia can play a no less role in its life than the United States does. (Portnikov, 1997: 35)

With the signing of the Russian-Ukrainian Treaty on friendship and cooperation, the relations between two countries entered a new phase of development. Russia has formally recognized inviolability of the Ukrainian state borders, as they appeared after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Ukraine has come to terms with the necessity to live and deal with Russia. The other country's policies ceased to be a matter of domestic concern for both of them.

The change affects both Russian and Ukrainian political cultures. In Ukraine, the political culture of fragmentation and dependency will have to be supplanted with self-reliant modes of political behaviour. Russians, on the other hand, will have to acknowledge that the times of empire are over, and start building a normal nation-state on the basis of multiculturalism and genuine federal arrangements. The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian dialogue may teach Moscow the difficult art of cross-cultural negotiations inside the former Soviet space – a lesson that will serve it well in dealing with domestic separatism and regionalism.

As Russian-Ukrainian relations improve, so do perspectives for Russian democracy. Of course, there can be no direct and simple correlation between the two. The political culture of international dialogue is a specific set of phenomena and has to be approached as a separate problem. And yet, results of international learning will not be lost on domestic politics. If the country's leaders are ready for a dialogue with former "junior partners" in the "near abroad," they should be equally prepared for domestic discussions and equally open to criticism at home. From this point of view, it is not enough to say that political culture of the Russian-Ukrainian dialogue is influenced by developments in both countries: the very development of both Russia and Ukraine depends on how they treat each other and how they learn to live together.

CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to correlate political culture and nationality in the post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine. It has been shown that the Ukrainian and Russian political cultures, though close in widespread perception and in reality, are informed by different historical memories and patterns of development. The identity crises both countries experience are rooted in different historical milieus, which makes their quests for new national identities go in near opposite directions. While Russians struggle to accommodate Ukrainian "otherness," Ukrainians find it difficult to rediscover the Russian "sameness." For a variety of reasons, dissolving the Ukrainian originality in Russianized "family culture" is undesirable from not only Ukrainian, but also Russian developmental perspective. Reciprocally, the Ukrainian struggle to become a part of "Europe," as opposed to the "Eurasian" Russia, overrates cultural distance between the two and creates false imagery that blocks the country's progress along the road of postcommunist transformation.

Analysis of Russian political culture in its historical development revealed two ideal-typical complexes that were labelled revolutionary-conservative and developmental-authoritarian respectively. The first complex embraces not only phenomena of oscillation between the periods of revolutionism and stagnation in social and political life of the nation, but also the tendency to seek stability through destruction and the idea that disasters may be effectively prevented by catastrophic means of action. The second complex is centred on the conviction that strong and authoritative power is necessary for the country's development and justified, even in the absence of democracy and wide political participation, by the "progressive" results of the rule. New Russian nationalism utilizes meaning-structures of both types, representing at once a conservative longing for mythologized "bigger" identity and an authoritarian thrust to "organize" social life via the state that should regain its strength and redeem the capacity to lead the nation.

Though authoritarianism is not alien to the Ukrainian polity either, it may not be regarded as a standing feature of the Ukrainian political culture. This culture had to address dilemmas of a stateless nation, since Ukrainians lacked a state of their own throughout most of history. They had to develop various strategies of accommodation to deal with foreign overlordship and the reality of a divided country. As different regions of the would-be Ukrainian state belonged to different masters, Ukrainian political culture could not help but

grow intrinsically fragmented. It remains regionally and linguistically fragmented now, which makes for the inconsistent and cautiously conservative character of mainstream political action.

Certain features of Ukrainian political culture are responsible for the parochial and dependent nature of modern Ukrainian nationalism. Being unable to secure mass mobilization on a grass-roots basis, Ukrainian nationalists have to rely on the "nationalizing" postcommunist state to push their program through. The state, however, has to perform a difficult balancing act between the Russified East and the "nationally conscious" West of the country. In the international arena, Ukraine has to acknowledge its geostrategic position of a "bridge" connecting Europe to Russia, neither of which can be ignored without detriment to Ukrainian national interests. Since disregarding Russia and Russians either inside or outside the country is hardly possible, "nationalizing" efforts of the Ukrainian state are bound to remain half-hearted.

An inconsistent and fragmented political culture is instrumental in upholding the internal stability of the country. Deeply ingrained dependency and parochialism, on the other hand, slow down the process of postcommunist economic restructuring and stifle private initiative. The accommodationist approach to most pressing problems in domestic and foreign policies remains an implicitly controversial strategy: it helps to prevent violent social conflicts and dissuade international tensions, but also contributes to the lack of decisive action, risk-avoidance and economic stagnation.

Russian-Ukrainian relations after the end of communism are at once products and manifestations of both countries' political cultures and national identities. Once transplanted into the international arena, Ukrainian-Russian relations acquire a new form of existence, precipitating profound changes in the culture of two peoples' communication. The benchmarks of culture change here are the shifts from the imperial and the centre-periphery models of communication to the model of more or less genuine international dialogue. In the latter model, Russia has to accept Ukraine as an independent international player in its own right. Ukraine, in turn, has to rise to its new status through diversification of the country's external contacts and activities. While the Russian offer of strategic partnership can not and should not be ignored, Ukraine attempts to build strategic links of equal weight and

importance with the developed countries of the West, the United States, Germany and Canada being among the preferred choices.

Reintegration of the two states into a confederation of some kind is not going to happen in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, both countries are well positioned to benefit from their bilateral relationship as it exists now, provided it is to develop into a full-fledged dialogue of the equals. In seriously taking Ukraine as its natural "bridge" to Europe, Russia will serve its own national interest, as well as the interests of other states in the area. Ukraine's benefit, as a denuclearized and non-aligned state, is obviously dependent on good relations with the eastern neighbour. Geopolitical and military considerations aside, Ukraine is in critical need of Russian assistance in such issue-areas as oil and gas supplies, debt restructuring and open trade policy. Ukraine's economy cannot be revived if the vast Russian market is not paid due attention.

Political culture and nationality intersect in a number of ways that cannot be addressed in full within the limits of the present work. I have mostly omitted the question of the large Ukrainian diaspora in the Russian Federation. The Russian ethnic super-minority in Ukraine has been given less than exhaustive treatment. Such aspects of ethnopolitics as party preferences of a given ethnic group, structure and direction of ethnic vote, etc., were either left out completely or touched upon with varying degrees of intensity. I cannot lay claim to any definitive exploration of the Russian-Ukrainian relations from the security perspective. The theory of international dialogue needs further elaboration from not only culturalist, but also institutionalist and realist research platforms.

All these topics are bound to draw continuous scholarly attention. The present study, though by no means exhaustive of the theme it announced, may be utilized in either positive or critical ways by the scholars of political culture and nationalism, as well as by the students of postcommunist transitions to democracy. I hope that some of the ideas and arguments of the work will not be left without response by colleagues who see cultural mediation of politics as a crucial and still less than adequately understood aspect of both internal and international life of a nation.

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